

KOGARATSU

After the snow



1. General Equilibrium Analysis

What is a General Equilibrium Model?

General Equilibrium Model
= A model that considers the interactions between all sectors of the economy simultaneously.

KOGARITSU

AFTER THE SNOW

scenario: Nichols

musical: Brown



Stand left
to right

Colder than the snow,
the winter moon
on white hair

Joso



After the snow

...DO NOT FEAR, LITTLE GIRL!



YOU CAN THINK OF ME AS
YOUR MOTHER! DO NOT FEAR,
DO NOT FEAR ANYMORE!



...FROM NOW
ON, YOU WON'T
HAVE TO BEND
YOUR HEAD!





So?...

...YOU OFFERED ME FOOD SO
I WOULD LISTEN TO YOU! I HAVE
EATEN, BUT SO FAR I HAVEN'T
HEARD ANYTHING! SPEAK!



WHAT ARE YOU
WAITING FOR?!
ASK HIM!



IT'S... IT'S MY GRAND
DAUGHTER, TOMOMI!
THE PEOPLE FROM THE
VILLAGE TOOK HER AWAY
TO OFFER HER AS A
SACRIFICE TO THE
MOUNTAIN GODDESS,
YAMA-NO-KAMI!



...I ...I WAS THINKING
THAT YOU, WHO ARE STRONG
AND COURAGEOUS, COULD
BRING HER BACK?!...



...YOU MUST BRING HER BACK, SAMURAI!
IF YOU DON'T, THE GODDESS'S TENGUS WILL
EAT HER HEAD! I BEG YOU TO ACCEPT!

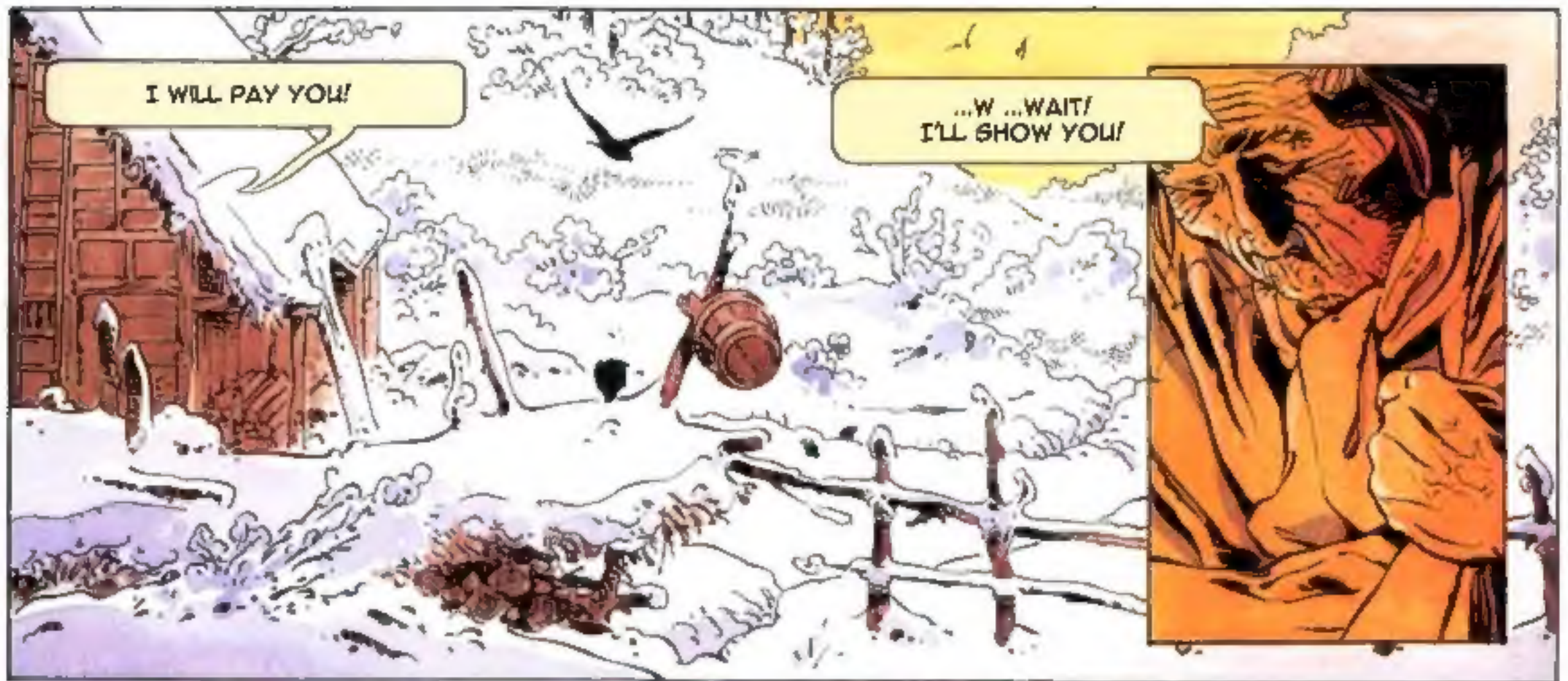


HMM... A CHILD TO SAVE...
MAYBE! BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD THE
MOST IMPORTANT POINT...



HOW ARE
YOU GOING TO
CONVINCE ME TO
ACCEPT THIS
MISSION?



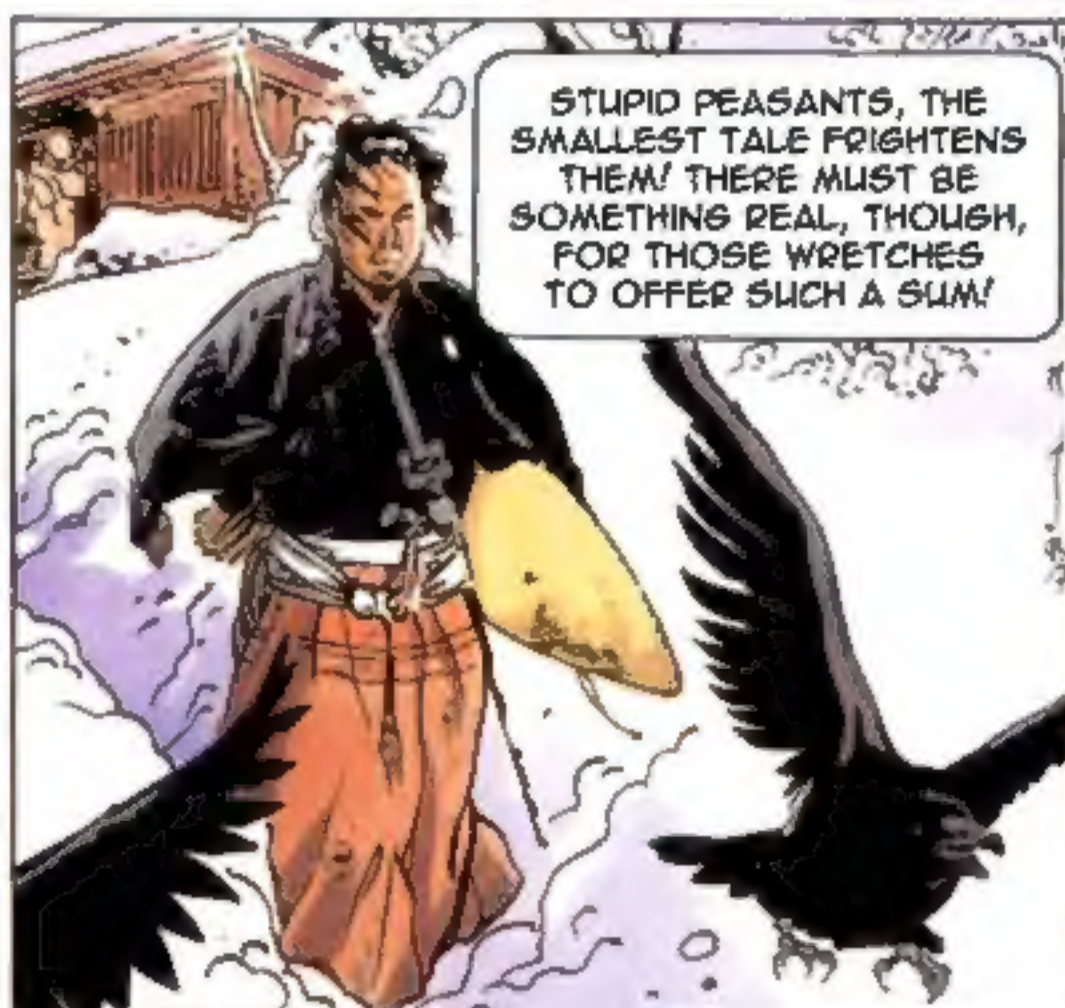




...BE CAREFUL WITH THE VILLAGERS, ESPECIALLY THEIR CHIEF, THE OLD OYABUN! AND BEWARE OF THE TENGUS LURKING IN THE MOUNTAIN! AS FOR MY LITTLE TOMOMI, YOU'LL RECOGNIZE HER EASILY, SHE'S ONLY THIRTEEN AND...



...SOME OF HER HAIR IS WHITE LIKE SNOW! DON'T FORGET!



STUPID PEASANTS, THE SMALLEST TALE FRIGHTENS THEM! THERE MUST BE SOMETHING REAL, THOUGH, FOR THOSE WRETCHES TO OFFER SUCH A SUM!



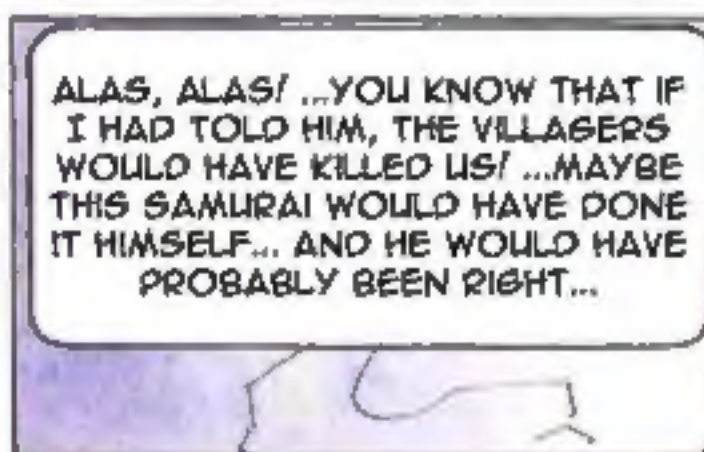
...AND THE GOLD HAD THE SEAL OF THE KASUMIS, THE CRACKED BELL! HOW THE HELL DID THEY OBTAIN IT? ...THIS CASE REALLY IS STRANGE.



WHY? ...WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL HIM ABOUT THE FEMALE DEMONS?



...WHY DIDN'T YOU MENTION THE CEMETRY THEY'RE HAUNTING, AND THE CASTLE? WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING ABOUT ALL THE OTHERS WHO NEVER CAME BACK?!



ALAS, ALAS! ...YOU KNOW THAT IF I HAD TOLD HIM, THE VILLAGERS WOULD HAVE KILLED US! ...MAYBE THIS SAMURAI WOULD HAVE DONE IT HIMSELF... AND HE WOULD HAVE PROBABLY BEEN RIGHT...



ALAS...



...PLEASE, DO NOT
LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT,
I'M NOT EVIL!



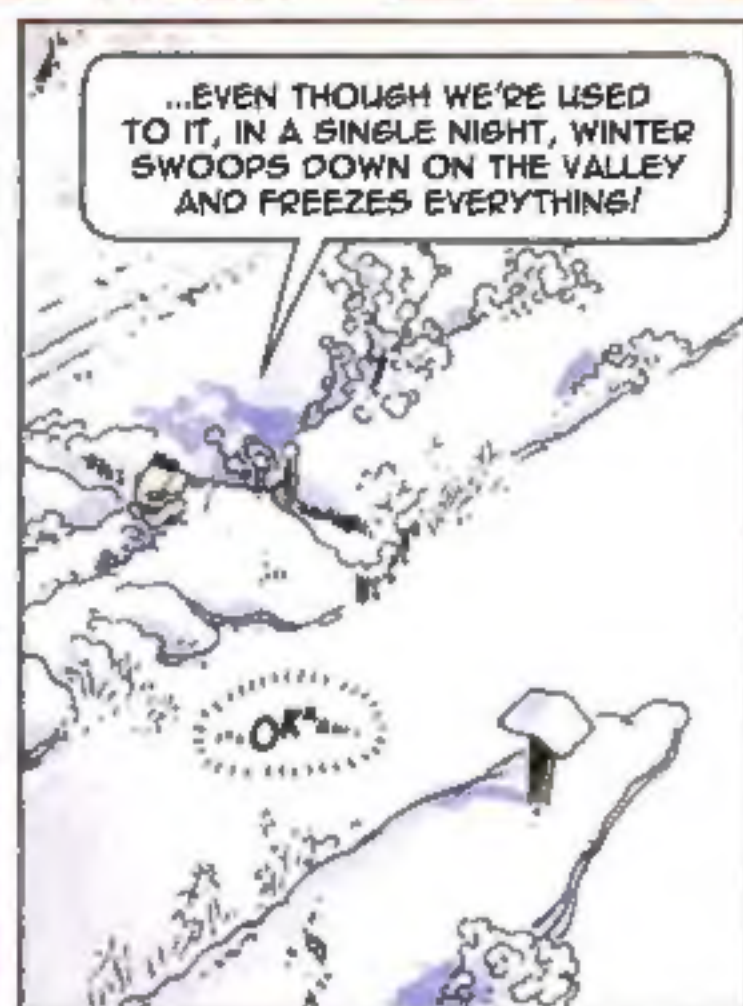
...IT IS NOT MY FAULT. IT IS ALL BECAUSE
OF THOSE PEASANTS FROM THE VALLEY,
THOSE YOU LOVED WHEN YOU WERE A KID,
THOSE YOU LOVED BECAUSE YOU WERE
PART OF THEIR COMMUNITY!



...THEIR VILENESS STAINED
AND BROKE EVERYTHING!
IS IT NOT JUSTICE THAT
NOW THEY MUST PAY?



...IT'S THE SAME EVERYTIME!



...EVEN THOUGH WE'RE USED
TO IT, IN A SINGLE NIGHT, WINTER
SWOOPS DOWN ON THE VALLEY
AND FREEZES EVERYTHING!



...EVERY TIME... HO!
ARE YOU LISTENING?



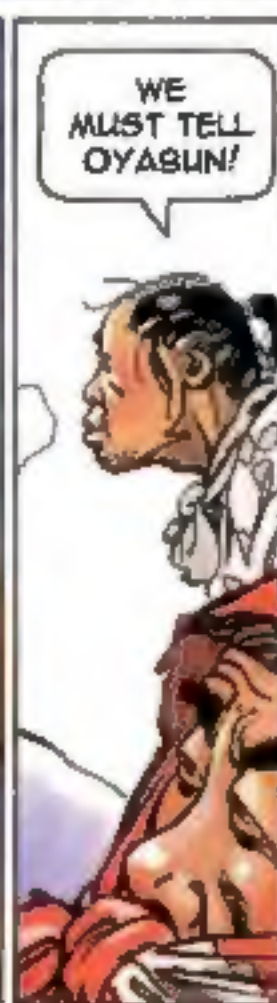
SABU.

SHUT UP!
YOU'RE
SPEAKING OF
MISFORTUNE?

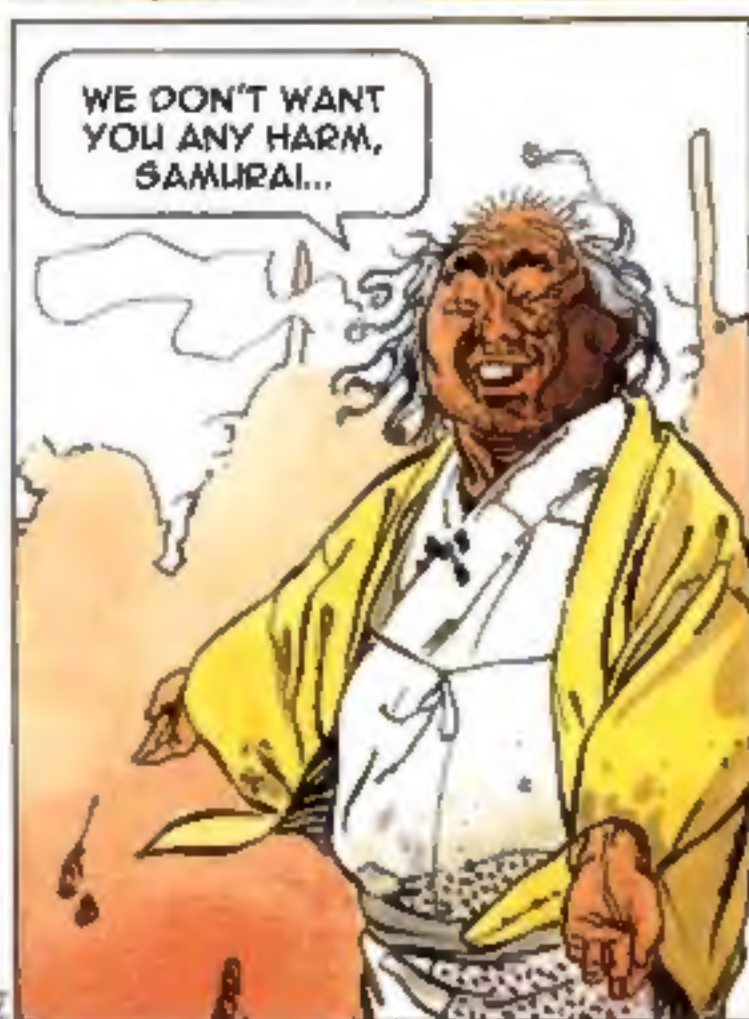


...WELL, THERE IT
COMES, BY THE ROAD!

A SAMURAI! DAMNIT!
THE OLD NAOTSUKE
DID IT AGAIN! MAY
TA-NO-KAMI HELP US!



WE
MUST TELL
OYASUN!



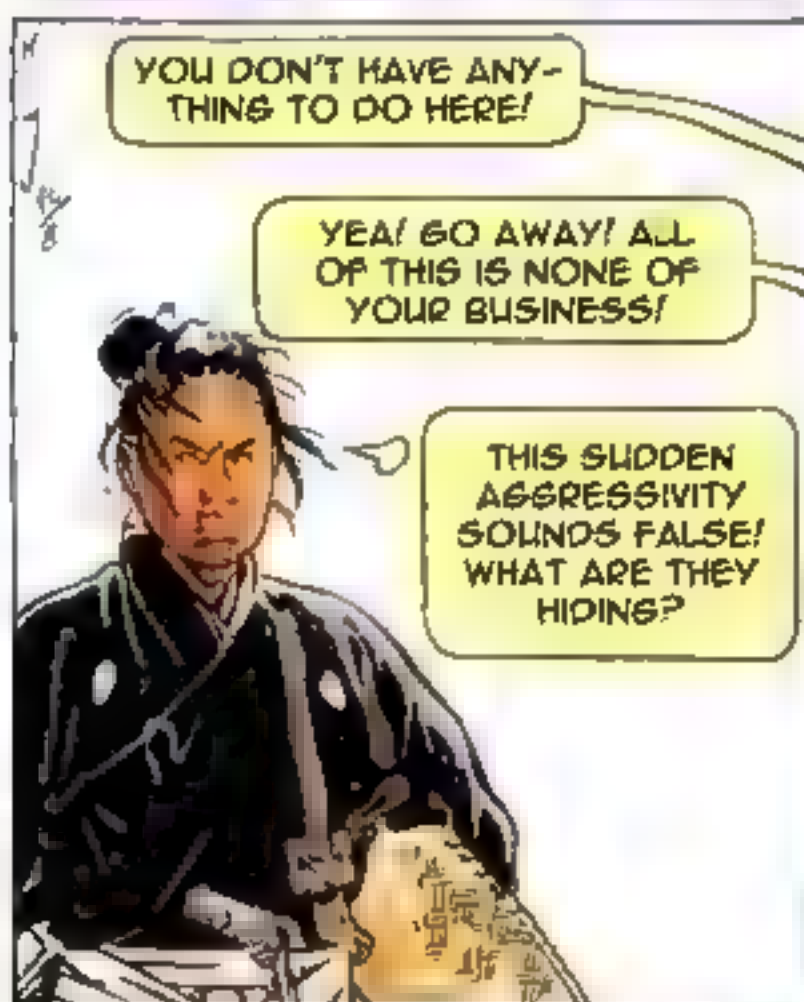


THAT'S RIGHT!
OYABUN'S TELLING
THE TRUTH!

LEAVE!

DON'T GO INTO THE
MOUNTAIN! IT'S BAD!

OYABUN! SO THIS IS
THE OLD MAN I MUST
BEWARE OF...



YOU DON'T HAVE ANY-
THING TO DO HERE!

YEA! GO AWAY! ALL
OF THIS IS NONE OF
YOUR BUSINESS!

THIS SUDDEN
AGGRESSIVITY
SOUNDS FALSE!
WHAT ARE THEY
HIDING?



I MUST GET OUT OF
THIS MESS BEFORE
THE SITUATION
TURNS BAD... THE
ROAD TO THE
MOUNTAIN... I SHOULD
BE ABLE TO REACH
IT BEFORE THEM!



THAT OLD
GEEZER MUST
HAVE PROMISED
YOU GOLD, NE?



.. WELL, THERE
NEVER WAS ANY
GOLD! ...HE NEVER
HAD ANY MONEY!
...NEVER!



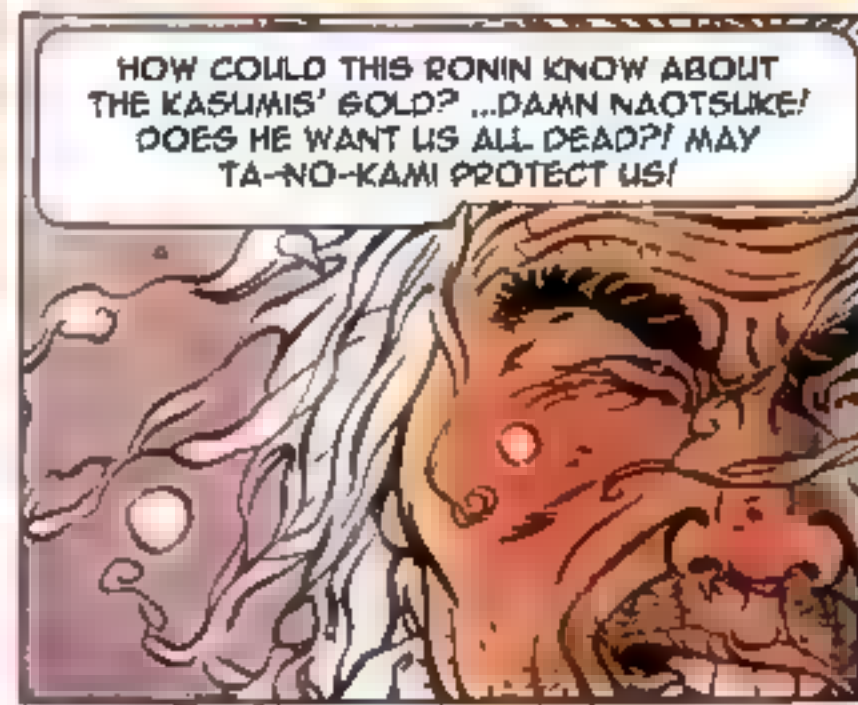
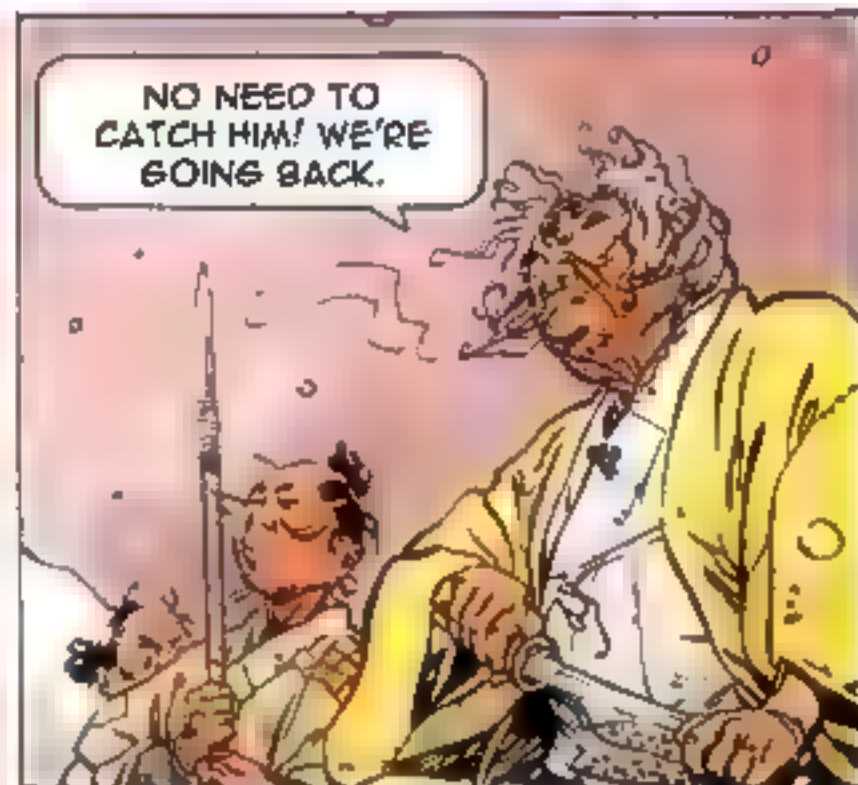
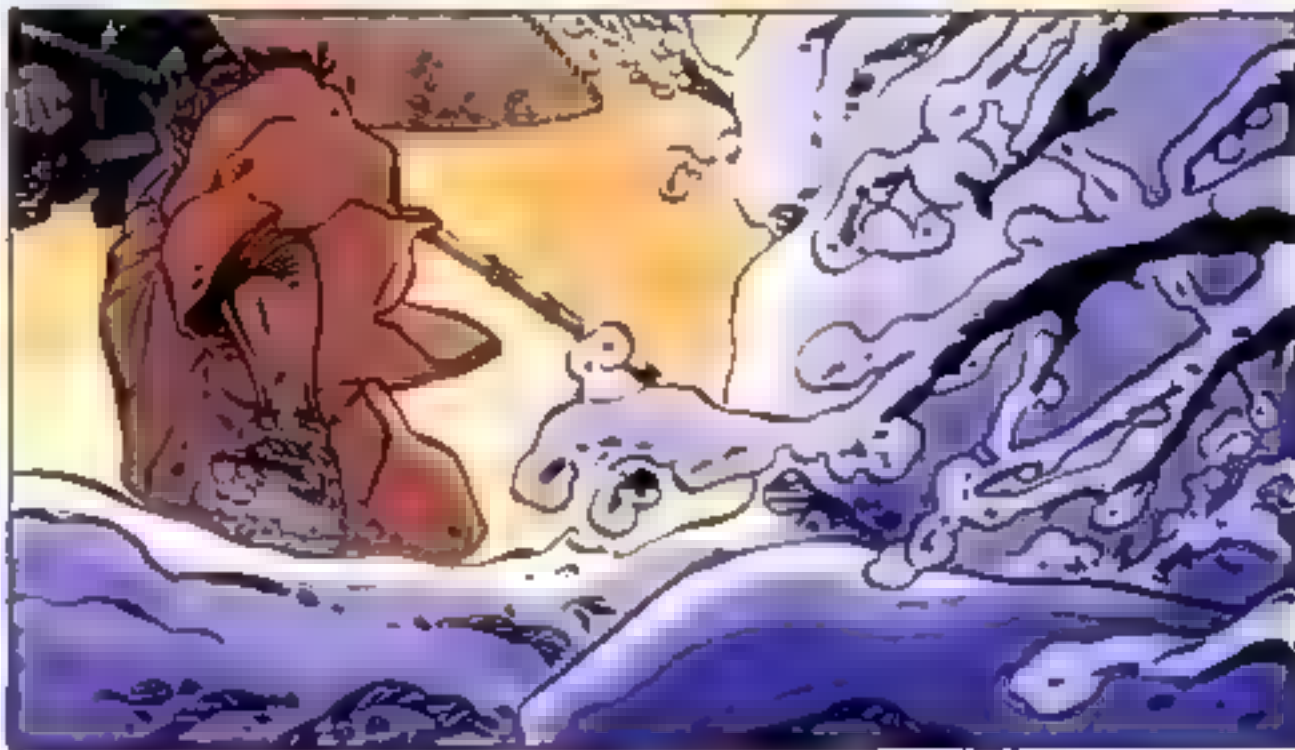
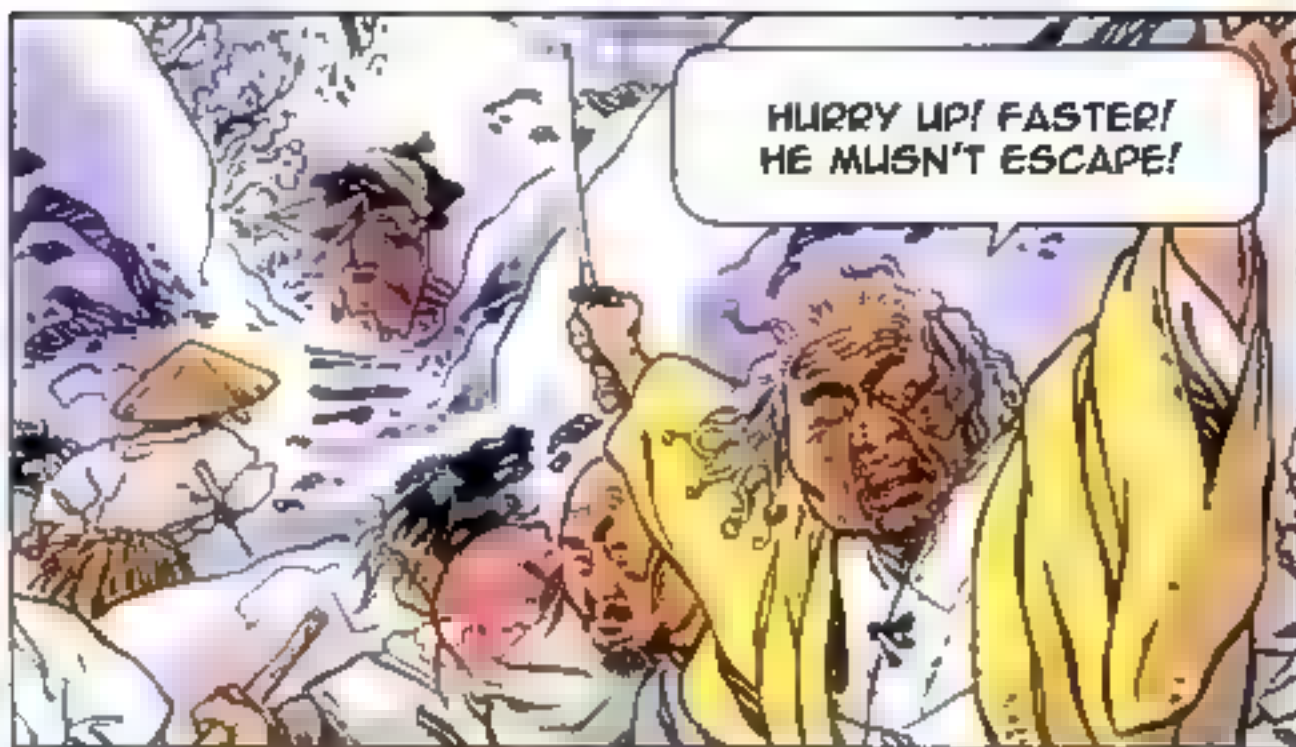
WHAT ABOUT
THE KASUMIS'
GOLD, THEN?!



YOU
LITTLE
MUCK-
RACKER!



HE'S... HE'S AN
ENEMY OF THE
GODDESS! KILL HIM!
DON'T LET HIM REACH
THE MOUNTAIN!

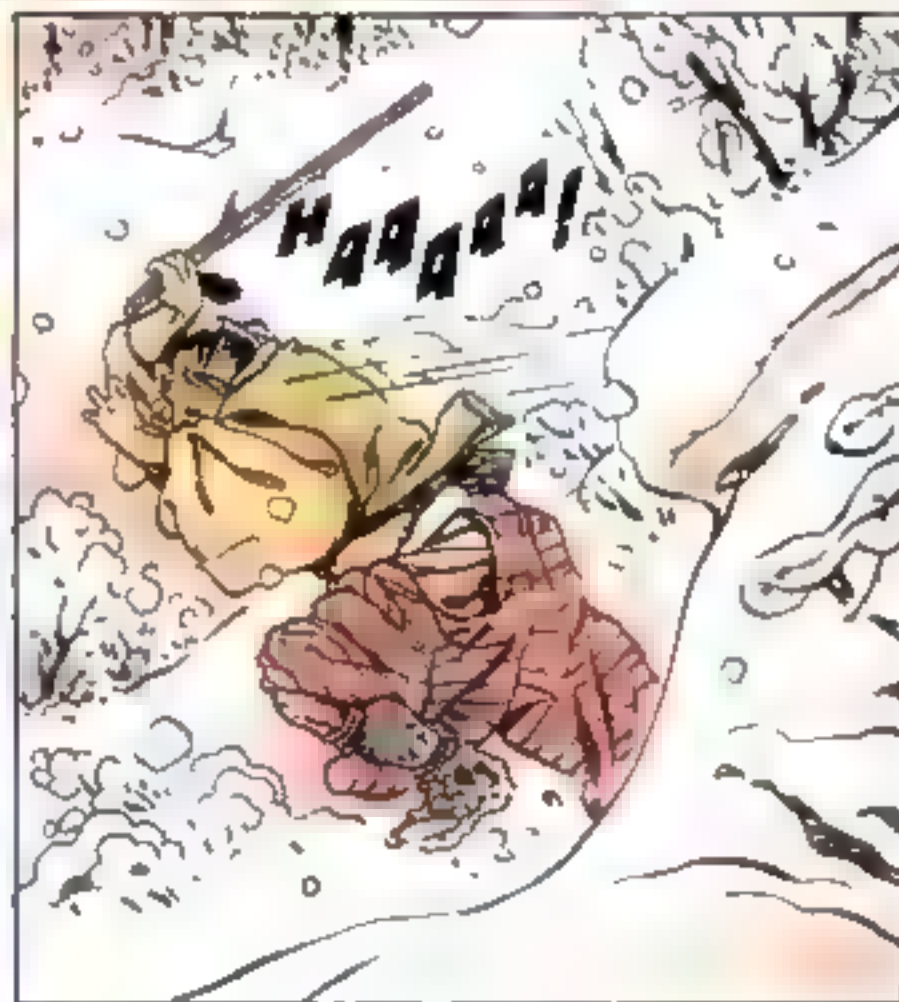
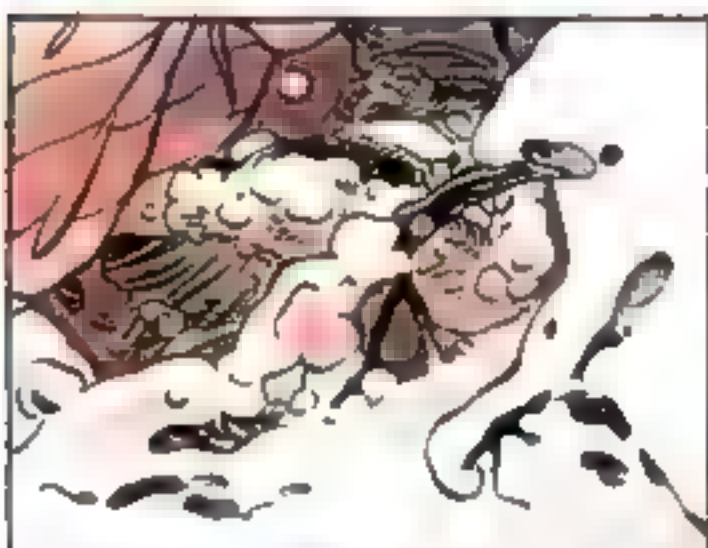


..IT WAS A LONG
TIME AGO AT THAT
TIME, WE WERE A
MODEST CLAN WITH
LITTLE POWER, BUT
NONETHELESS
FAMOUS.

..A TREMENDOUS BATTLE HAD
JUST TAKEN PLACE, AND WE HAD
LOST! ..MY HUSBAND, MY SONS,
MY BROTHERS, OUR DEAR SAMURAI'S.
SO MANY PROUD WARRIORS!
THEY WERE ALL DEAD!

..WAR DIDN'T
TAKE ALL OF THEM
BUT WE HAD HEARD
OF THEIR DEFEAT
BEFORE THEIR
RETURN...

..PEASANTS CAN LIVE STANDING ON
THEIR KNEES FOR THEIR WHOLE LIFE,
BUT THEY CAN NEVER FORGIVE ANY
WEAKNESS TO THOSE WHO RULE
OVER THEM...

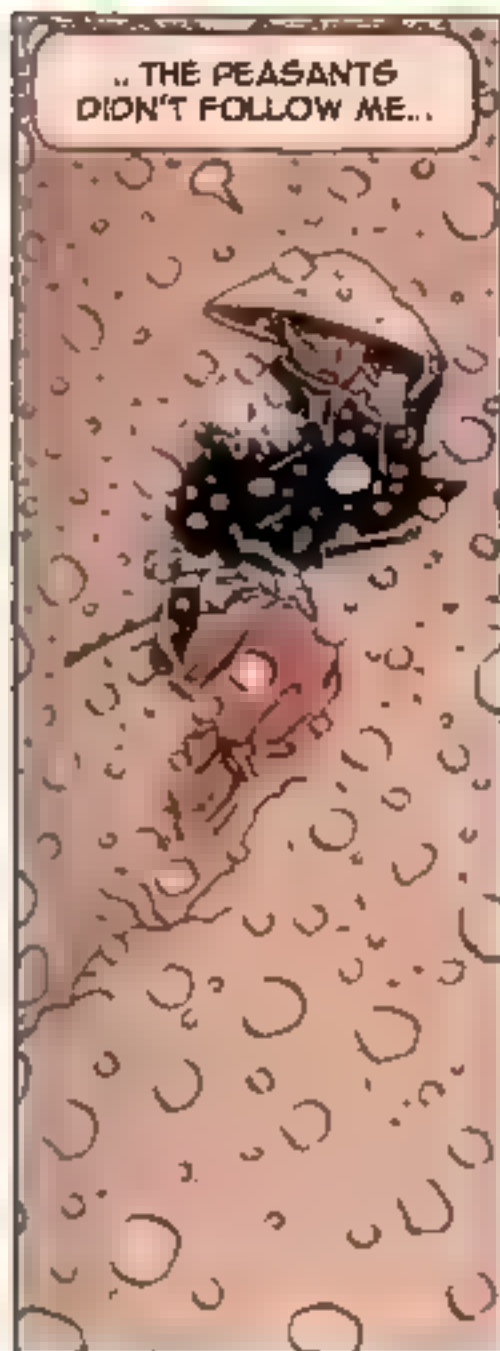


There is no more sky or earth
Nothing but the snow
Never to stop falling

Hashen



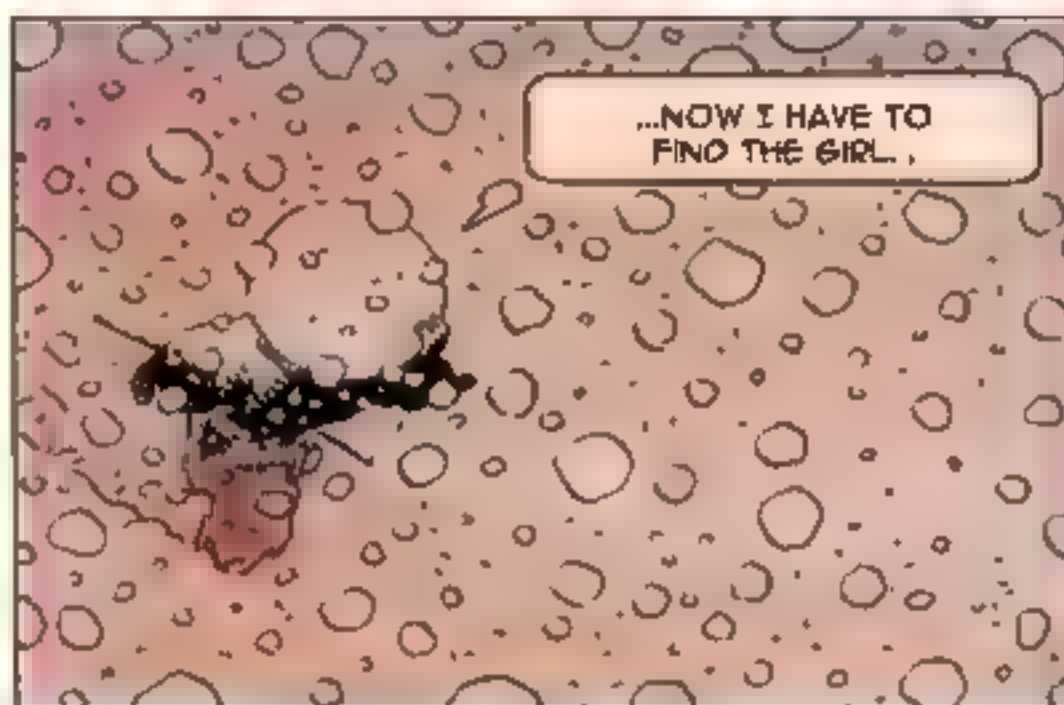
.. THE PEASANTS
DIDN'T FOLLOW ME...



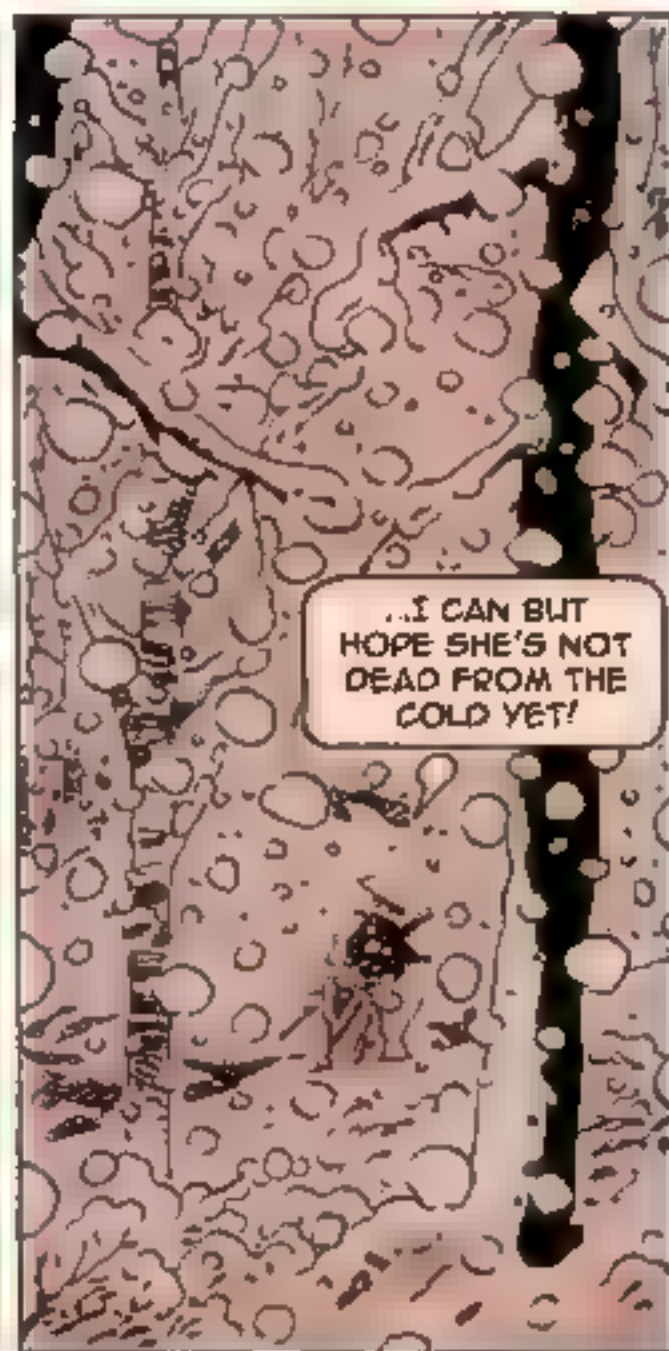
.. THAT ALONE IS PROOF
THAT THERE IS A TABOO
ON THIS MOUNTAIN!...



...NOW I HAVE TO
FIND THE GIRL...



...I CAN BUT
HOPE SHE'S NOT
DEAD FROM THE
COLD YET!



..NOT TO MENTION THERE
ARE MANY POSSIBLE PATHS,
AND IF THE SNOW KEEPS
FALLING, I'LL HAVE NO
CHANCE TO FIND HER!

..WHAT KIND OF SITUATION DID I
GET MYSELF INTO?! ..I ACCEPTED
AN ODD MISSION AND..

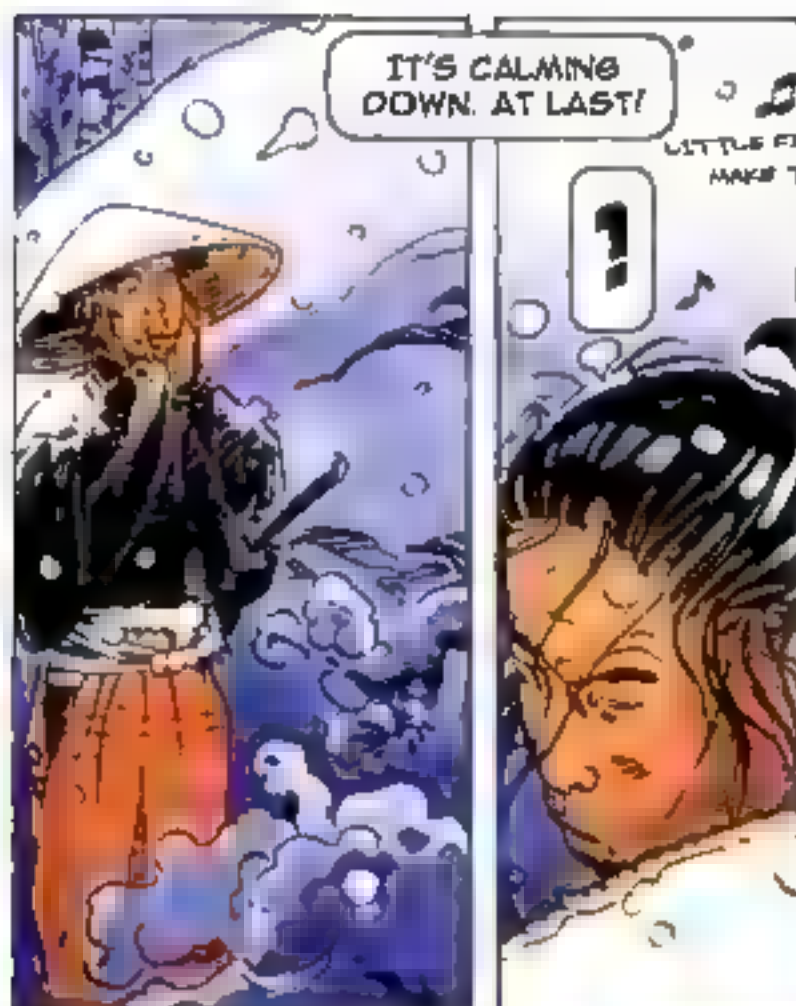
..I HAVE ALL THE
LOCALS AGAINST
ME! MY LATE MASTER
WOULD HAVE BEEN
PROUD OF ME!

HA! HA! HA!

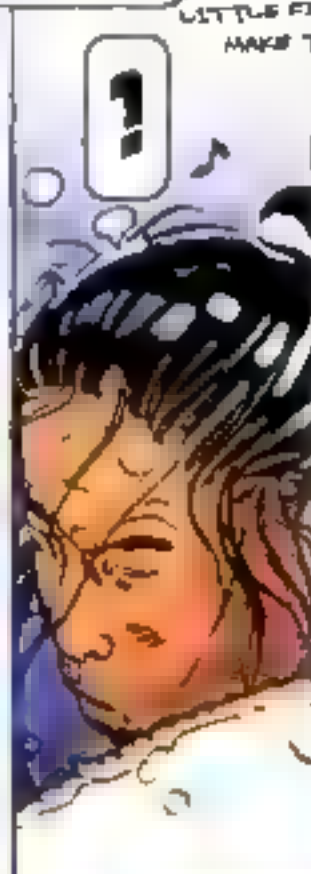
PFF.
HE! HE!
HE!

Y
AA!

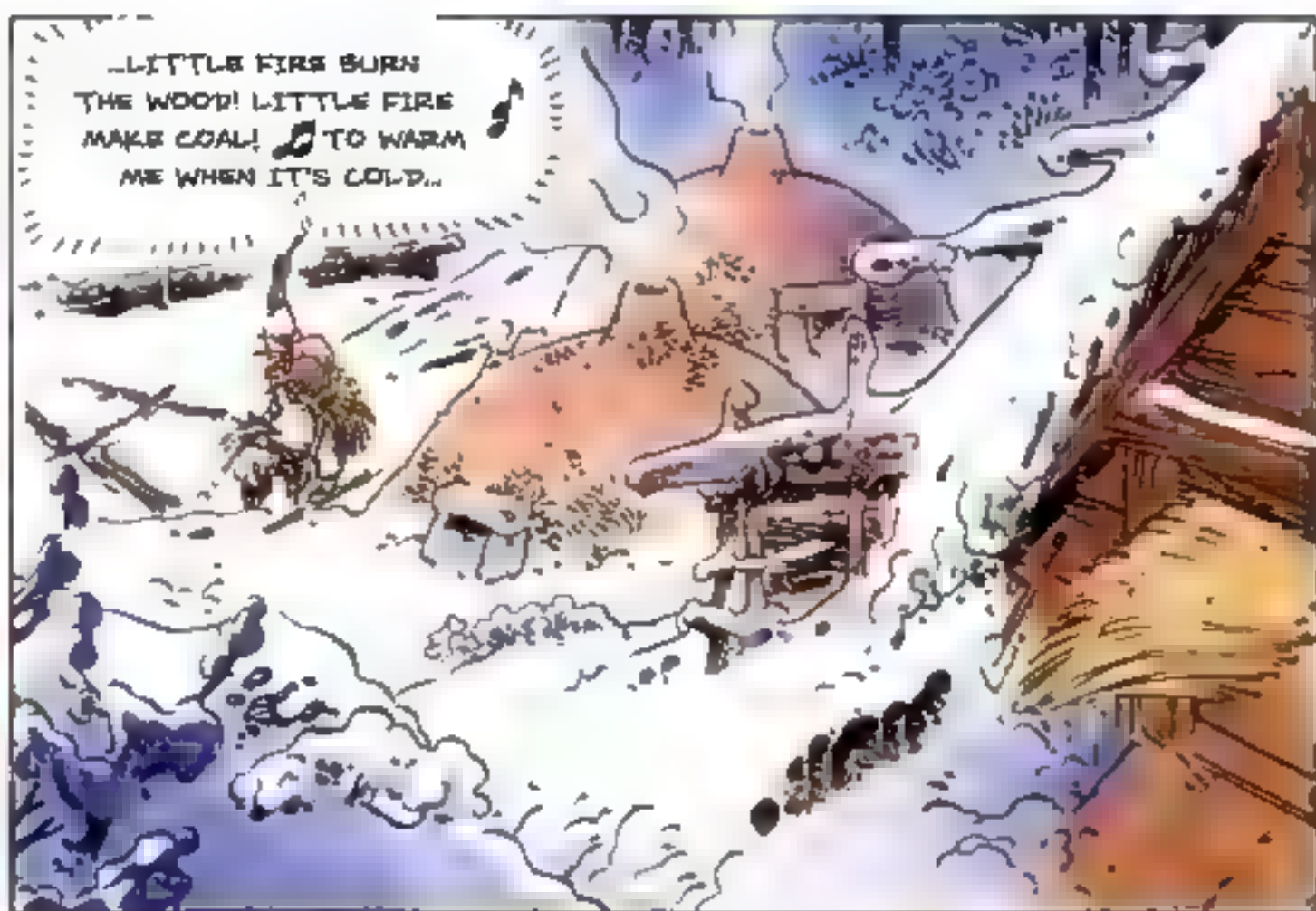
WE'RE CLOSING
IN ON HIM!



IT'S CALMING DOWN. AT LAST!



1



...LITTLE FIRE BURN THE WOOD! LITTLE FIRE MAKE COAL! TO WARM ME WHEN IT'S COLD...

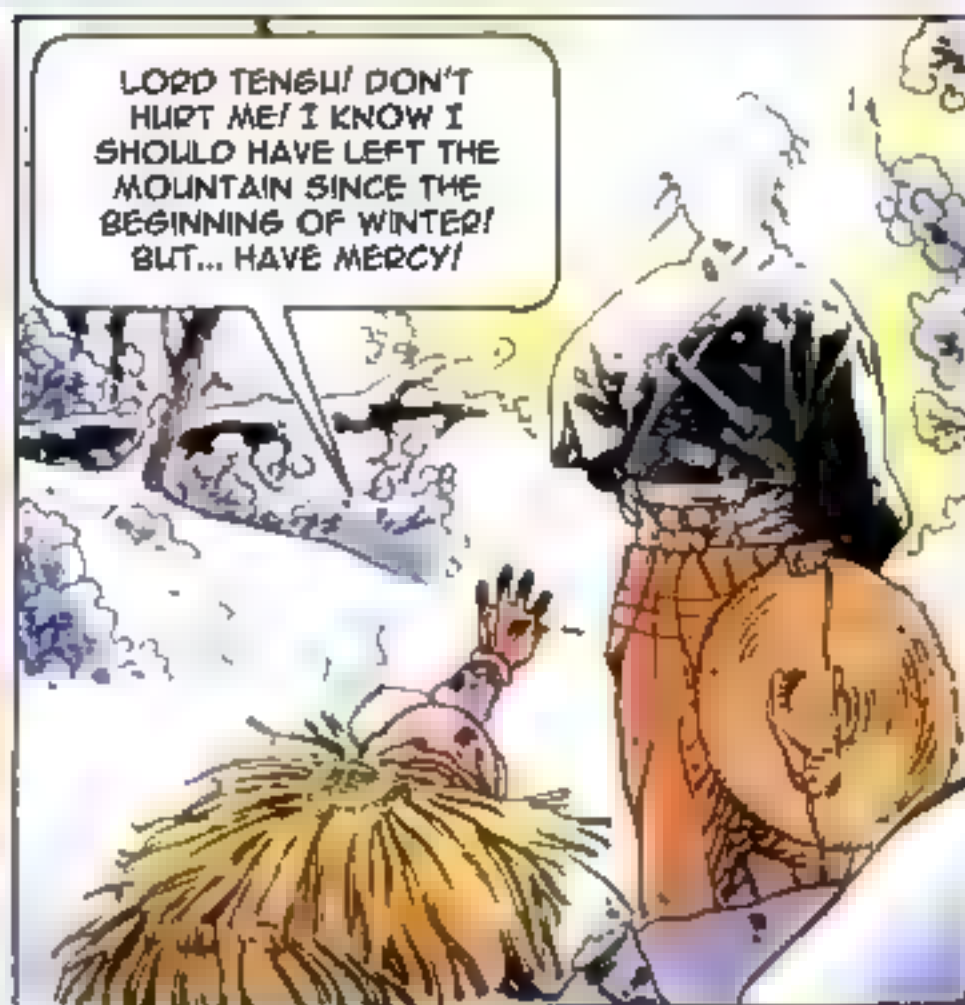


...LITTLE FIRE...

!!



HAG!



LORD TENGU! DON'T HURT ME! I KNOW I SHOULD HAVE LEFT THE MOUNTAIN SINCE THE BEGINNING OF WINTER! BUT... HAVE MERCY!



...THIS YEAR'S GOING TO BE COLD AND THE PEASANTS WILL NEED A LOT OF COAL AND...

ENOUGH!

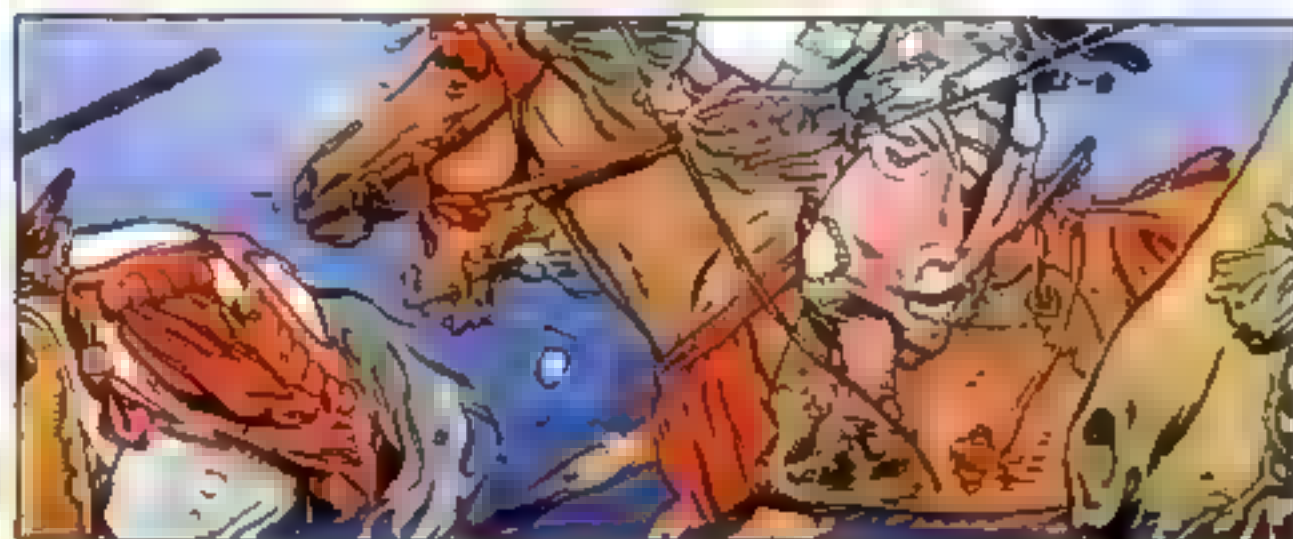


I AM NO MORE A TENGU THAN YOU ARE A COAL MERCHANT!

!!



HI! HI! HI! HI!



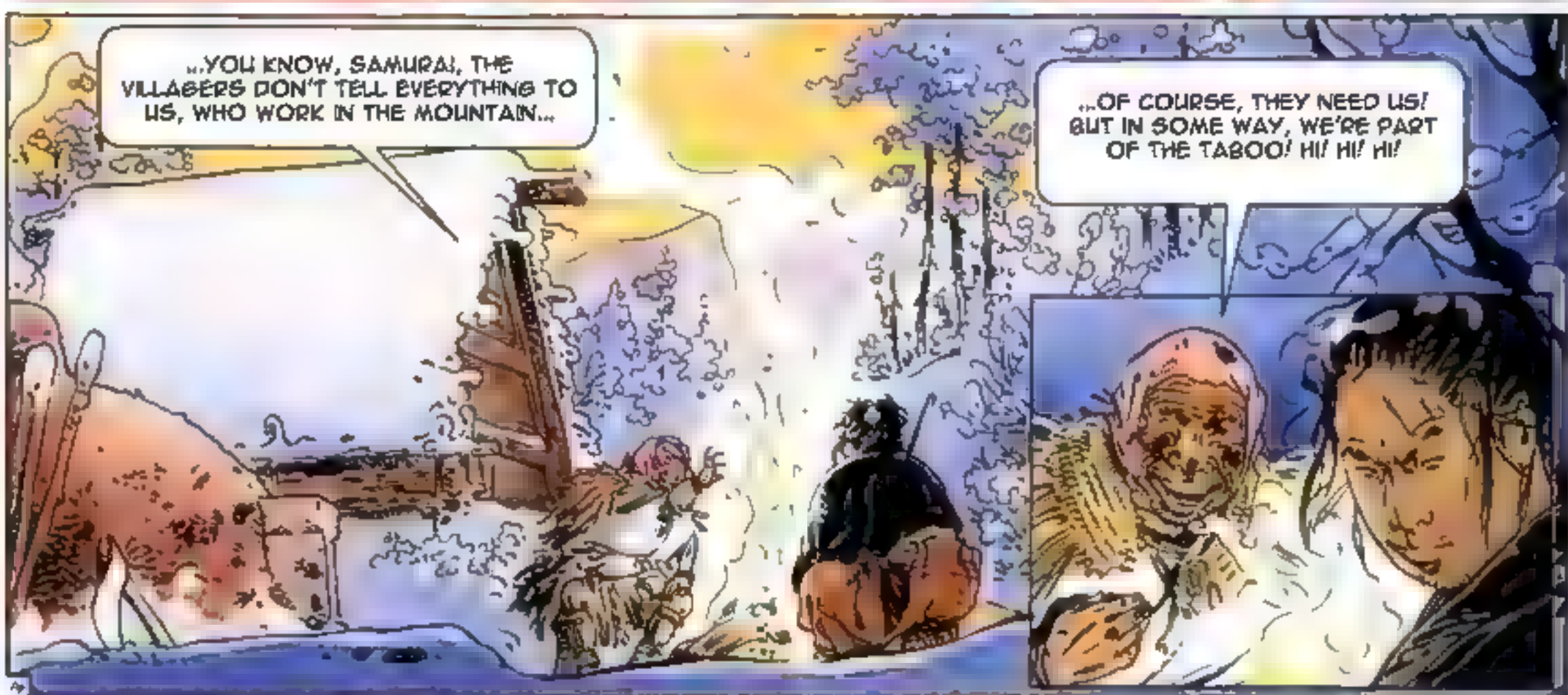
„THE PEASANTS! THEY ORGANIZED A FEAST
TO WELCOME BACK THEIR WARRIORS. THEY TRIED
TO KEEP THEM FOR THE NIGHT...

„BUT OUR PEOPLE
WANTED TO GO BACK
TO THE CASTLE! THEY
KNEW THAT ONLY THERE,
WOULD THEY BE SAFE!



„YOU KNOW, SAMURAI, THE
VILLAGERS DON'T TELL EVERYTHING TO
US, WHO WORK IN THE MOUNTAIN...

„OF COURSE, THEY NEED US!
BUT IN SOME WAY, WE'RE PART
OF THE TABOO! HI! HI! HI!



...WHAT IS THIS CULT
CONCERNING YAMA-NO-
KAMI ABOUT?

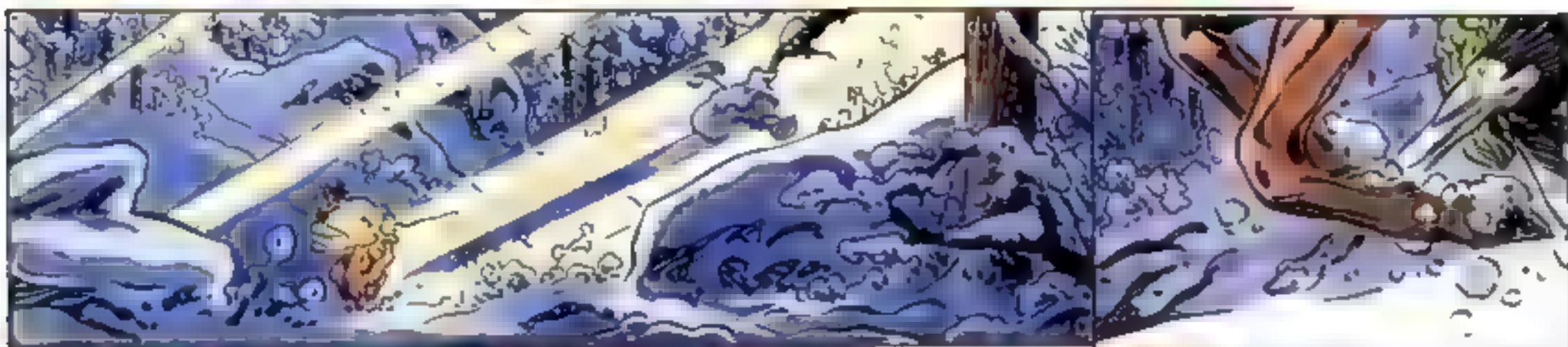
FOUR TIMES A YEAR,
THEY GO IN THE
MOUNTAIN AND OFFER
QUANTITIES OF FOOD
AS GIFTS! IN THE FIRST
DAYS OF WINTER,
THEY BRING A MAIDEN.
SHE'S INTENDED TO
SERVE THE GODDESS
FOR A WHOLE YEAR...
BUT, THEY NEVER
COME BACK!

YOU MEAN THEY DIE FROM
COLD IN THE MOUNTAIN.

NO! NO! ONCE I WENT
TO THE SANCTUARY,
THE DAY AFTER THE GIFT...
HI! HI! HI! TO STEAL SOME
FOOD! HI! HI! HI!

.. WELL, THERE WAS
NOTHING LEFT! THE
TENGUS HAD TAKEN
EVERYTHING AWAY!
FSHHH!

HOW VERY STRANGE THAT THOSE
CREATURES SEEM TO BE INTERESTED
IN WORDLY OBJECTS...

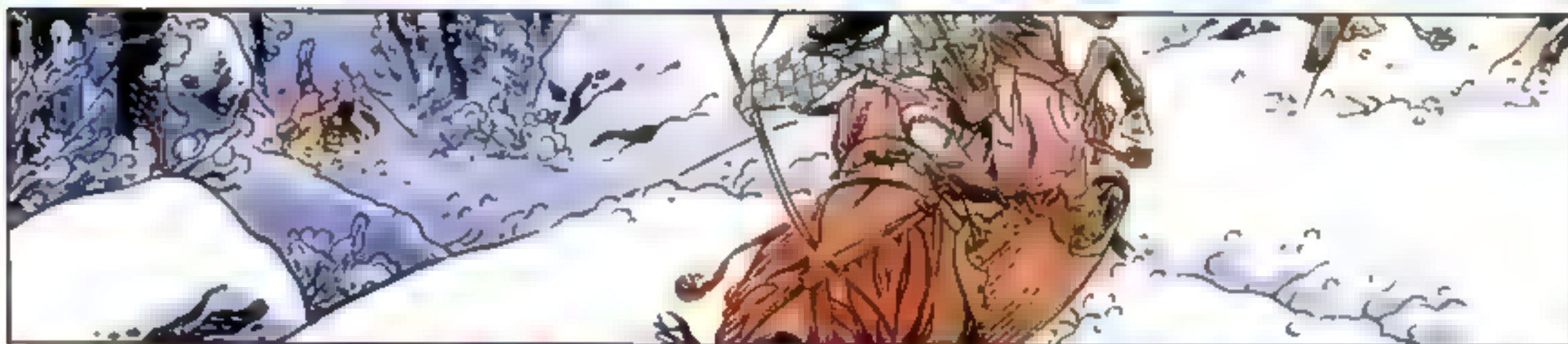


...BUT IT WAS TOO LATE, THEY
COULDN'T ESCAPE THEIR FATE...

...THE PEASANTS HAD POISONED
THEIR FOOD, AND FOLLOWED THEM
IN THE MOUNTAIN. THEY WERE
WAITING FOR THE FIRST EFFECTS
OF POISON TO SHOW BEFORE
ATTACKING!

HAAA!

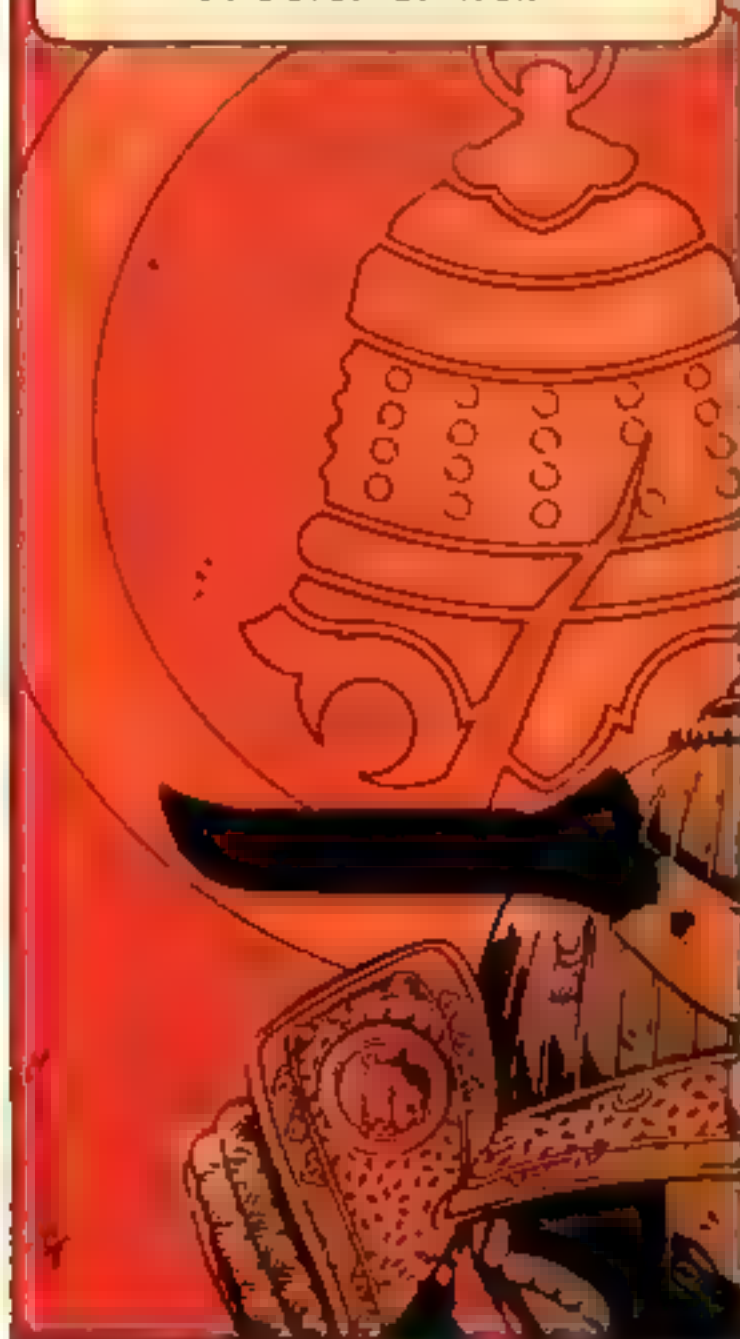


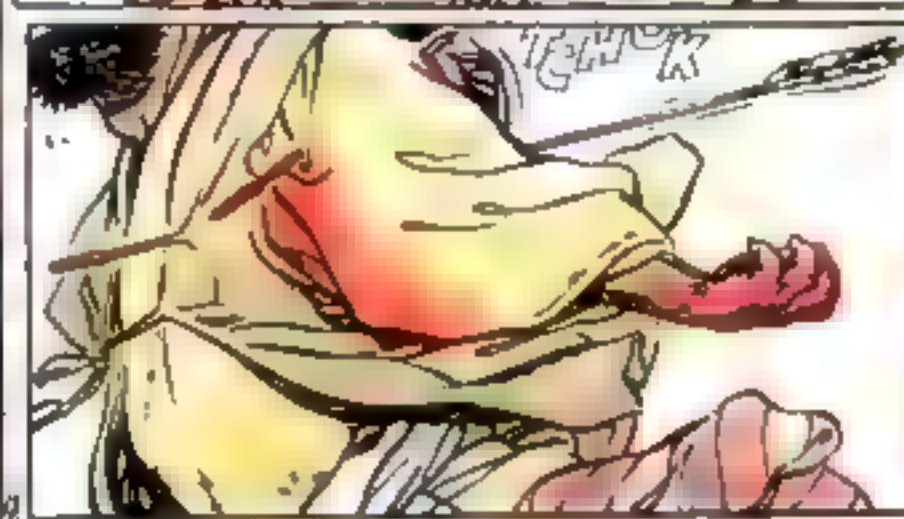
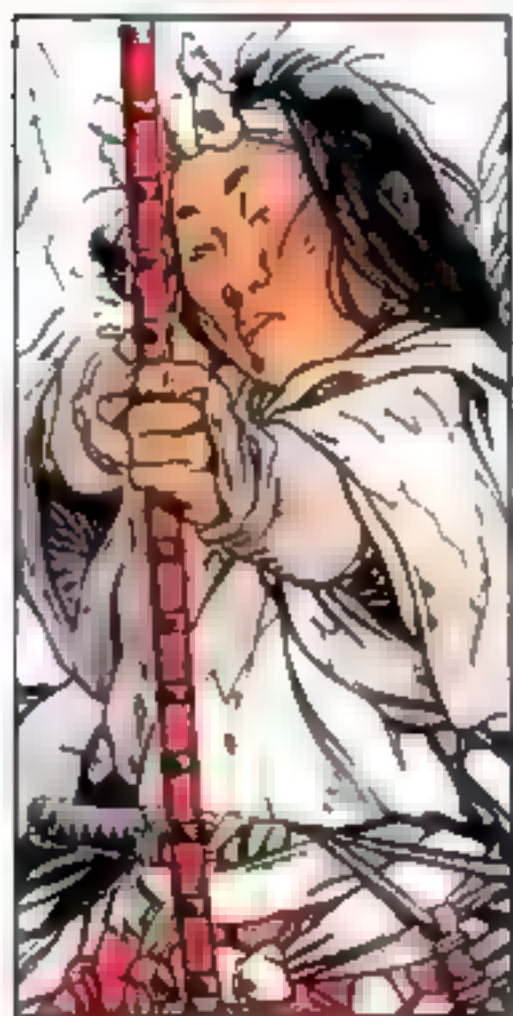


MY HUSBAND, MY SONS,
MY BROTHERS.. ALL THE
WARRIORS OF OUR CLAN
MADE HALT ON A HILL...
THEY WERE DOUBLED UP
WITH PAIN.



...THEN... THEN, ARMED WITH FORKS,
SICKLES AND PIKES, THE PEASANTS
SWOOPED ON THEM!





THEY ACTED THE WAY THE DO
WHEN THEY HUNT THE BEATERS PUSHED
THE WARRIORS THAT COULD STILL
WALK TOWARDS THE EXECUTIONERS!
..WE HEARD THEIR SCREAMS DURING
THE WHOLE NIGHT

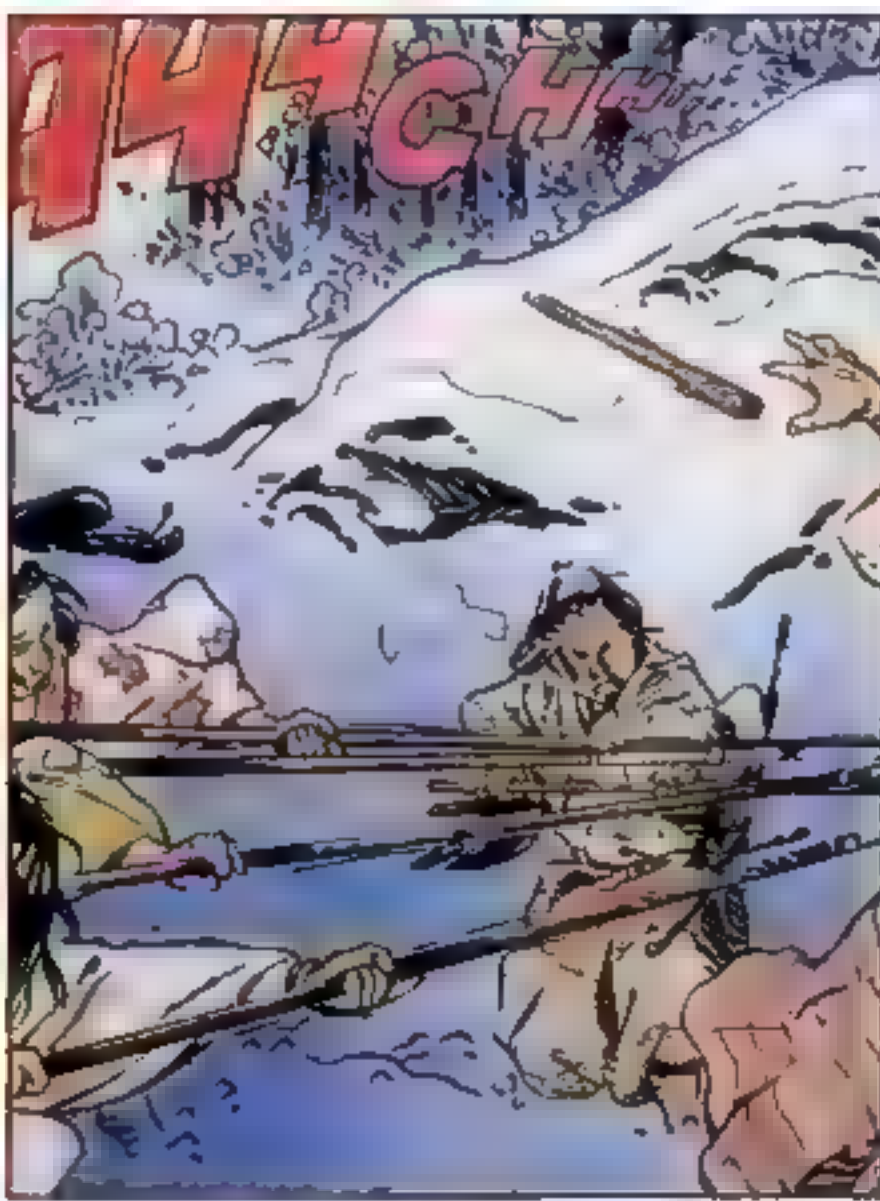
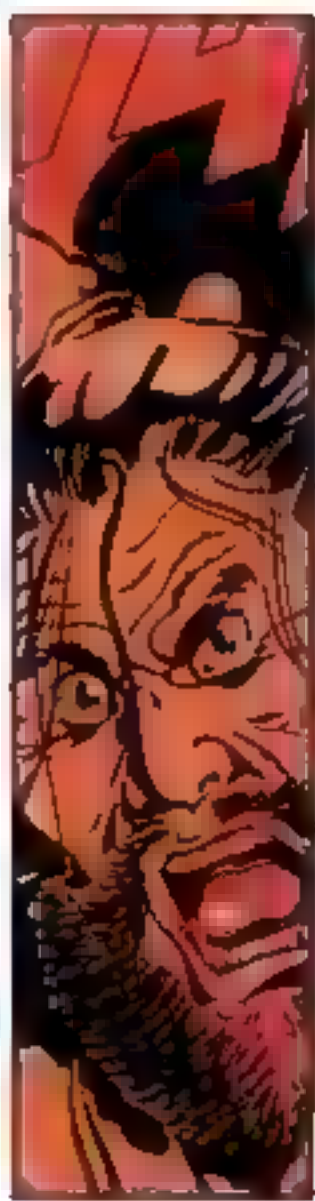
.. THE PEASANTS DIDN'T SHOW
ANY PITY NONE SURVIVED..

THEN THE
LOOTING
STARTED!

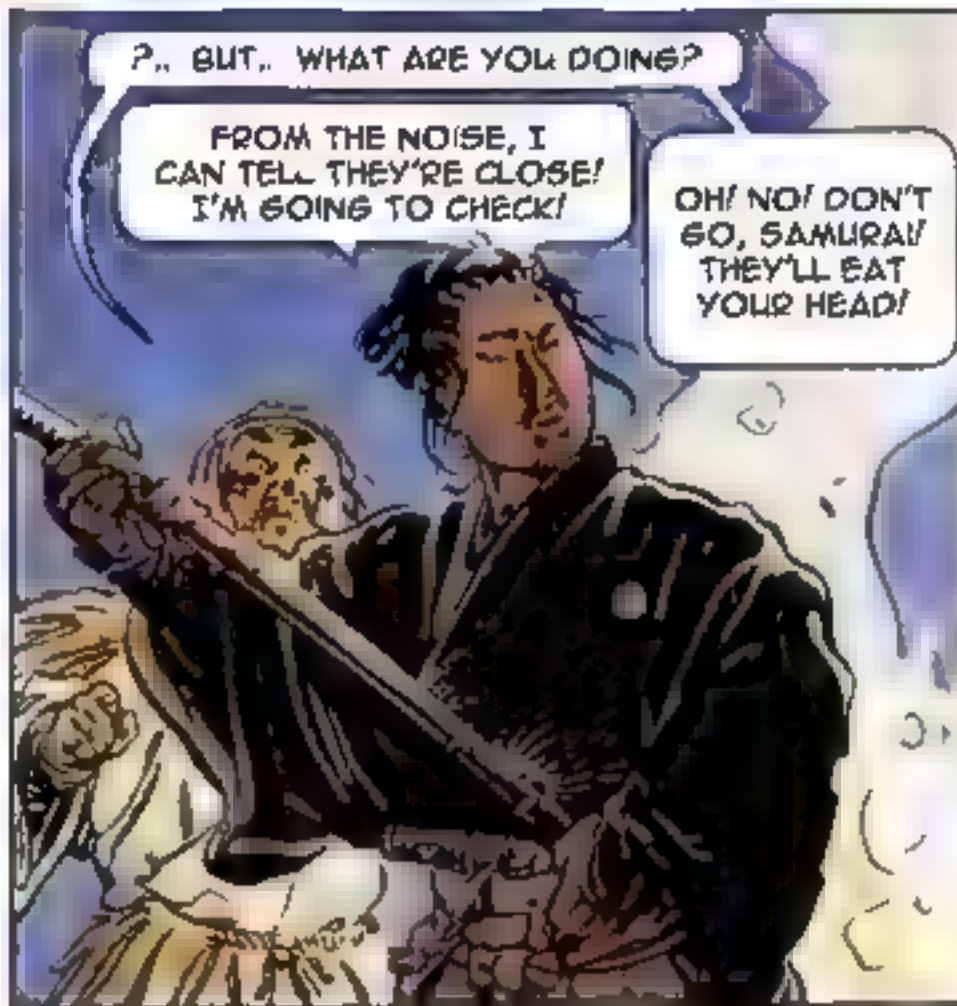


..MY HUSBAND, DEAD! MY
SONS, DEAD! MY BROTHERS,
DEAD! OUR SAMURAI, DEAD!

..ALL DEAD!
ALL OF THEM..



LISTEN, SAMURAI... THIS IS THE SOUND TENGUS MAKE WHEN THEY'RE HUNTING!



P.. BUT.. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

FROM THE NOISE, I CAN TELL THEY'RE CLOSE! I'M GOING TO CHECK!

OH! NO! DON'T GO, SAMURAI! THEY'LL EAT YOUR HEAD!

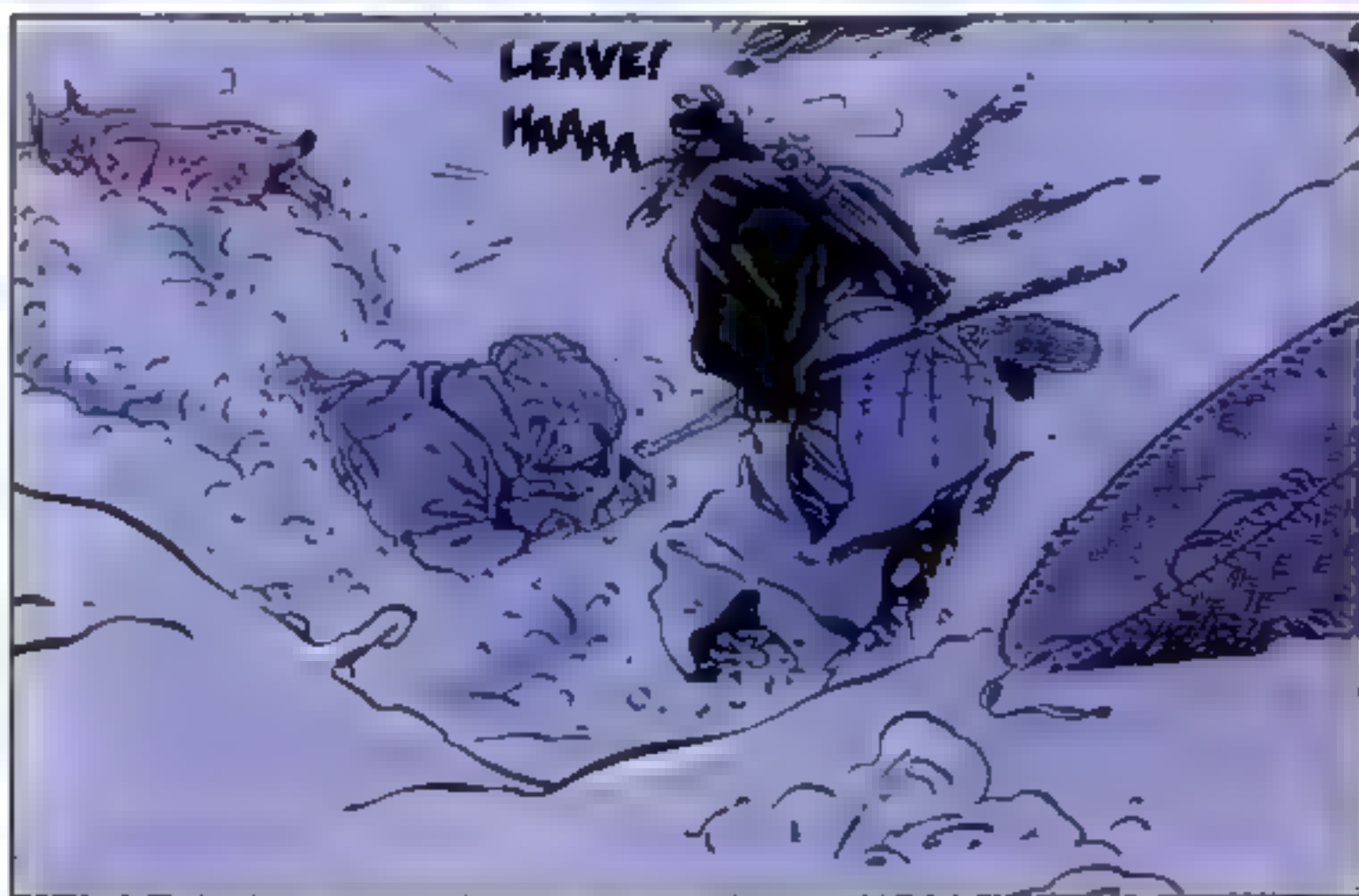
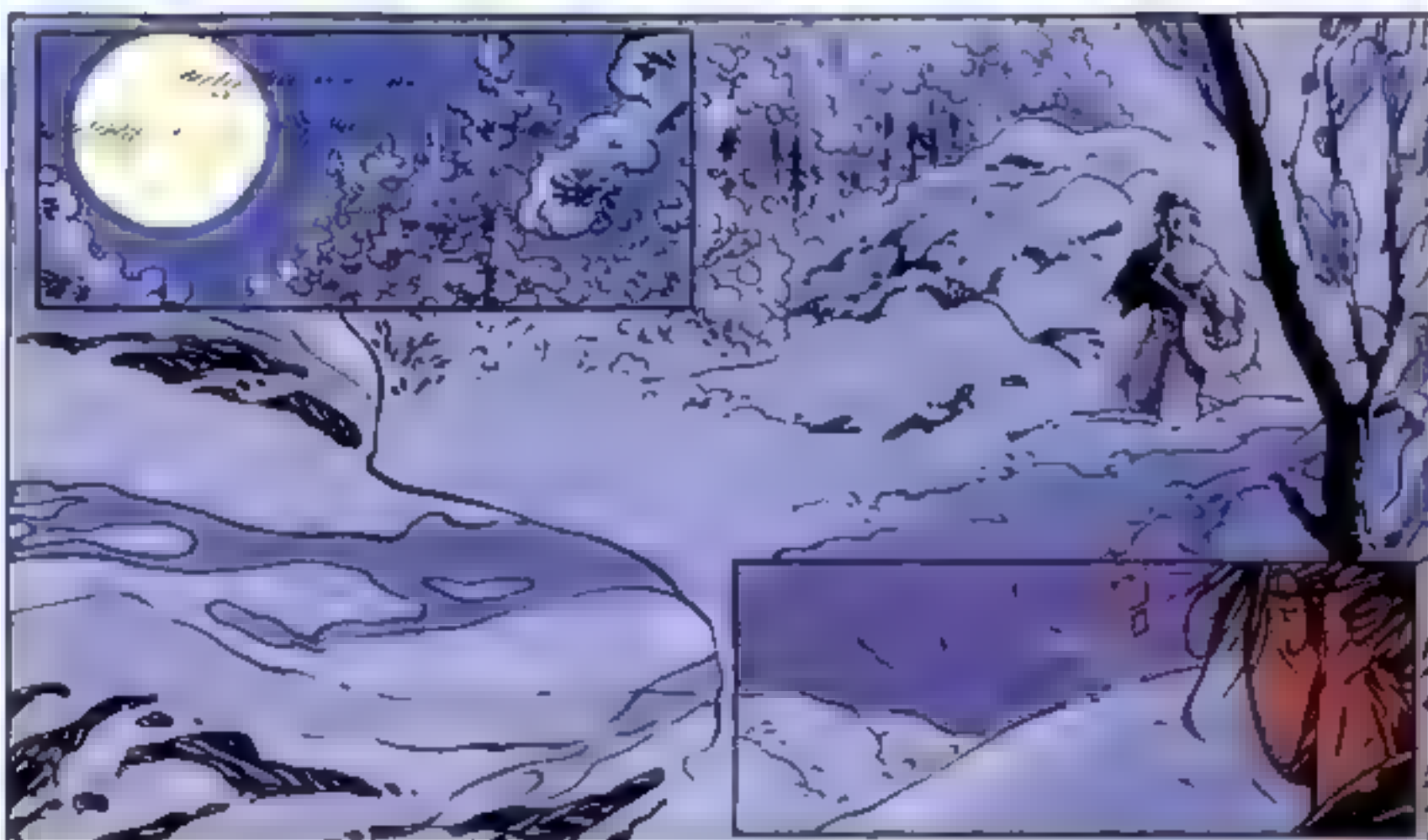


...OTHERS LIKE YOU THOUGHT THEY COULD CONFRONT THEM! DON'T!

THOSE DEMONS CAN
TAKE ANY FORM THEY
WANT! THEY CAN CHANGE
IN TREES! OR FOXES!
BE CAREFUL!



IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE
MAIN STRENGTH OF THESE SO
CALLED TENGUS IS THE FEAR
THEY INSPIRE AND IF THEY ARE
FROM THIS WORLD AS I THINK,
THEY SHOUL'D LEFT TRACES
BEHIND THEM..



THEIR "PREY", OR WHAT'S LEFT OF IT... THE "TENGUS" ATE HIS HEAD... IT'S LIKE THE COAL MERCHANT SAID.

CLEAN WORK FLAW-LESS. THOSE DEMONS' TEETH ARE TOO SHARP FOR MY TASTE..

FROM THE TRACES, THERE WAS QUITE A FEW OF THEM... SIX? MORE?

THESE ARE HOOF TRACES... SEEMS LIKE THEY HEADED FOR THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN..

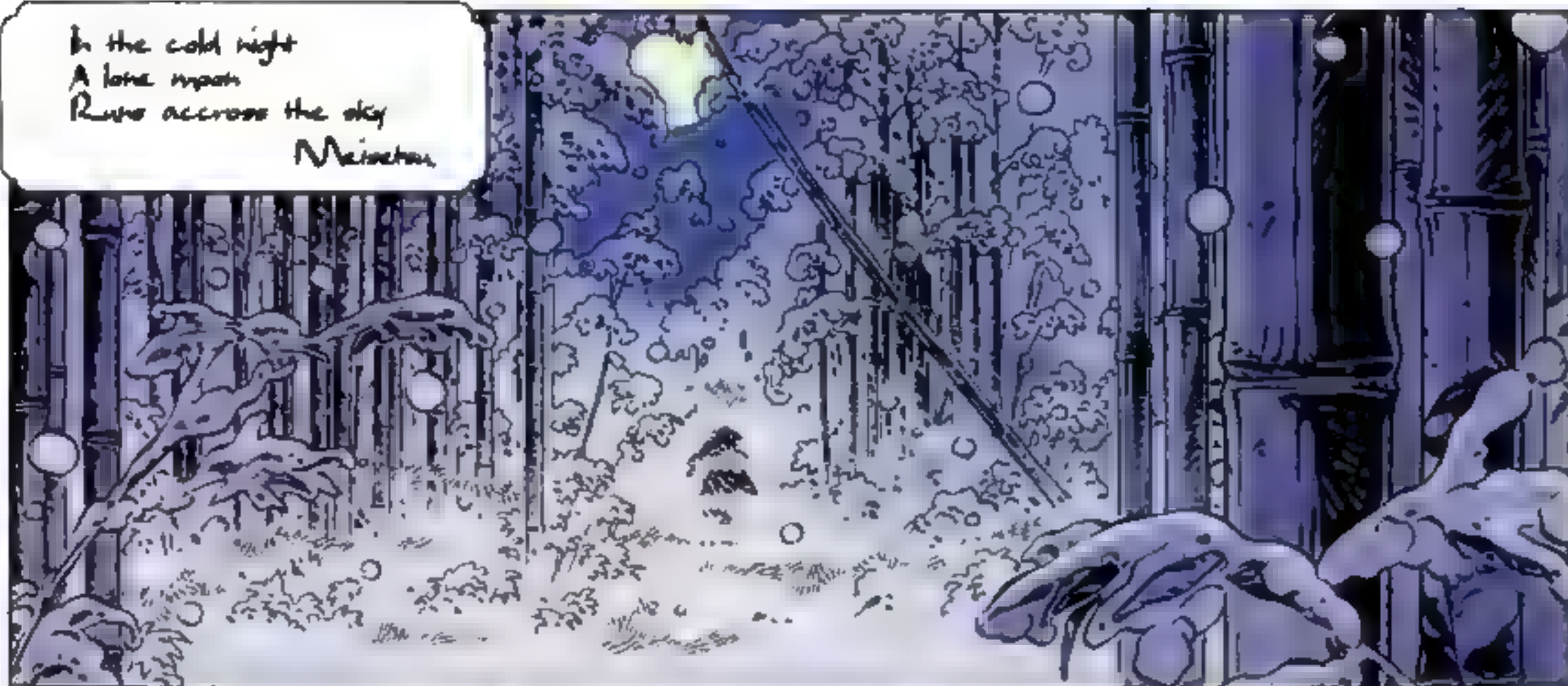
..FOR A MOUNTAIN THAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE FORBIDDEN, THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE AROUND... UNLESS EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED!

...THE ONLY THING I CAN DO NOW IS TO FOLLOW THEIR TRAIL!

.. WITH THE SURPRISE, I'LL HAVE TIME TO FREE TOMOMI AND WE'LL DISAPPEAR INTO THE NIGHT BEFORE THEY CAN REACT! ...OR SO I HOPE.

IT MUST BE A GANG OF CROOKED SAMURAI'S... WITH SOME LUCK I'LL BE ABLE TO SPOT THEIR FIRE AND AMBUSH THEM TONIGHT!

In the cold night
A lone moon
Runs across the sky
Mistaken



DAMNIT! I LOST THEIR
TRAIL! ..NO WONDER
WITH THIS FOG...



AND THE
SNOW IS HIDING
THEIR TRACES!



?!



WAIT...



..MY TRAIL... IT'S MY
OWN TRAIL! I'M COMPLETELY
LOST! I MIGHT AS WELL
FORGET THE SURPRISE
VISIT I WANTED TO PAY
THOSE BRISANDS!

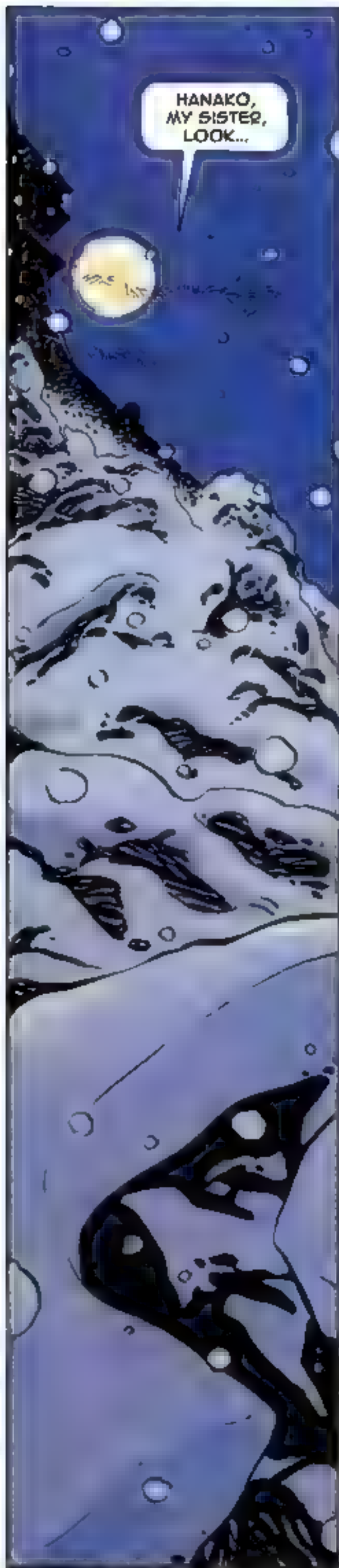


THE MOST IMPORTANT
THING TO DO FOR NOW IS
TO NOT FREEZE TO DEATH!
I NEED FIRE AND SHELTER!



..IF BRISANDS THERE ARE!
I'M STARTING TO DOUBT THE
CREDIBILITY OF THIS CASE..





HANAKO,
MY SISTER,
LOOK...



ANOTHER ONE CAME!



STUPID FOOL! HE MUST BE
COMING HERE TO TRY TO IMPOSE
TA-NO-KAMI'S LAW UPON US.



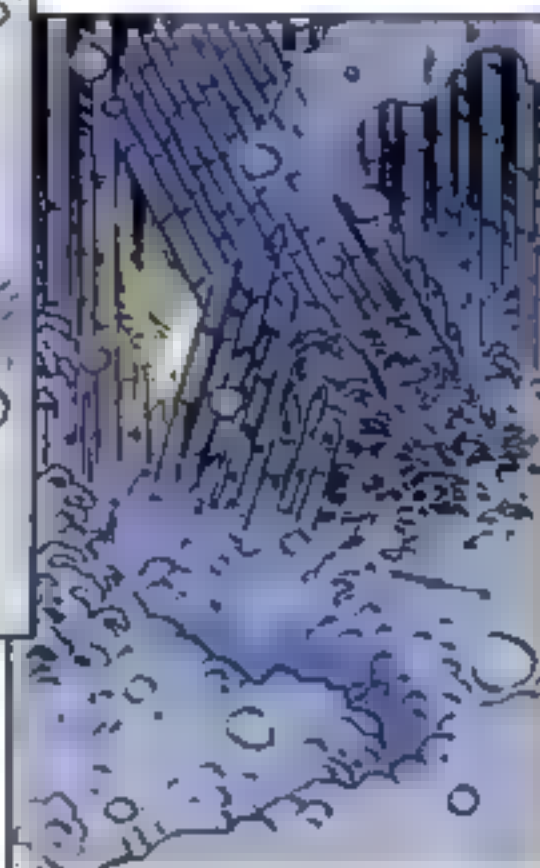
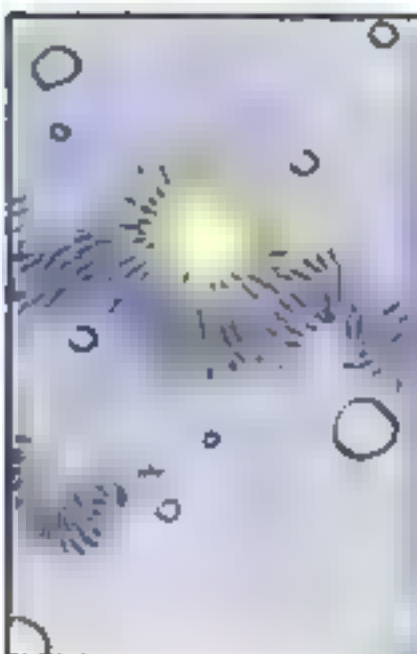
SHE'LL NEVER ALLOW OUR
MOTHER TO SUFFER FROM
THOSE PEASANTS AGAIN!

YES, MY SISTER, HE'LL
PAY LIKE THE OTHERS!



...THE GODDESS
WON'T ALLOW IT!

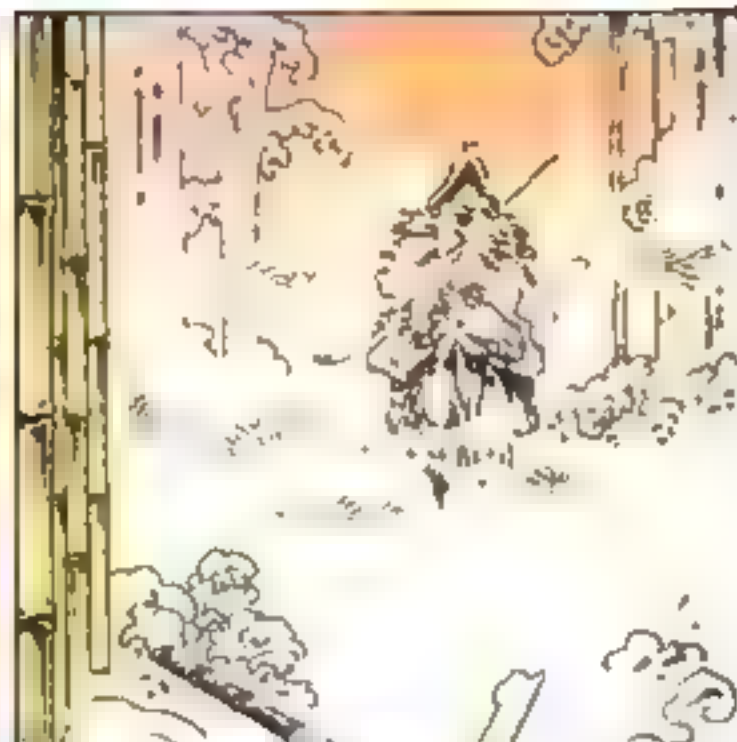
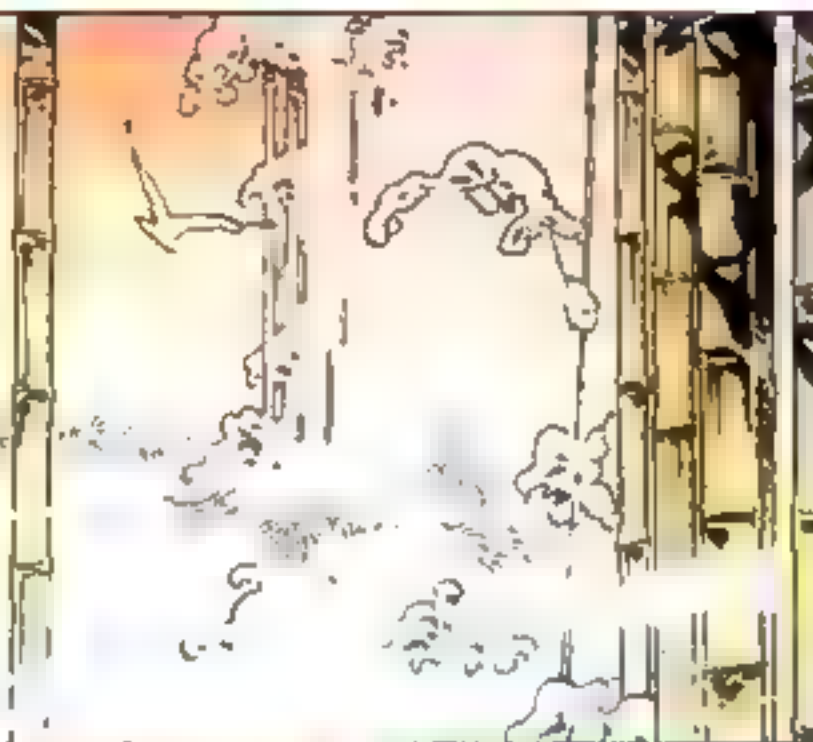
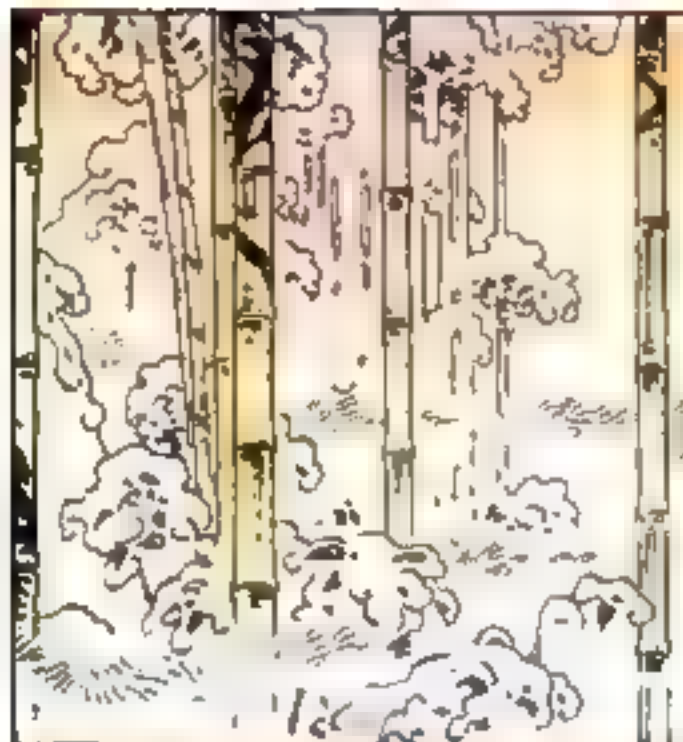
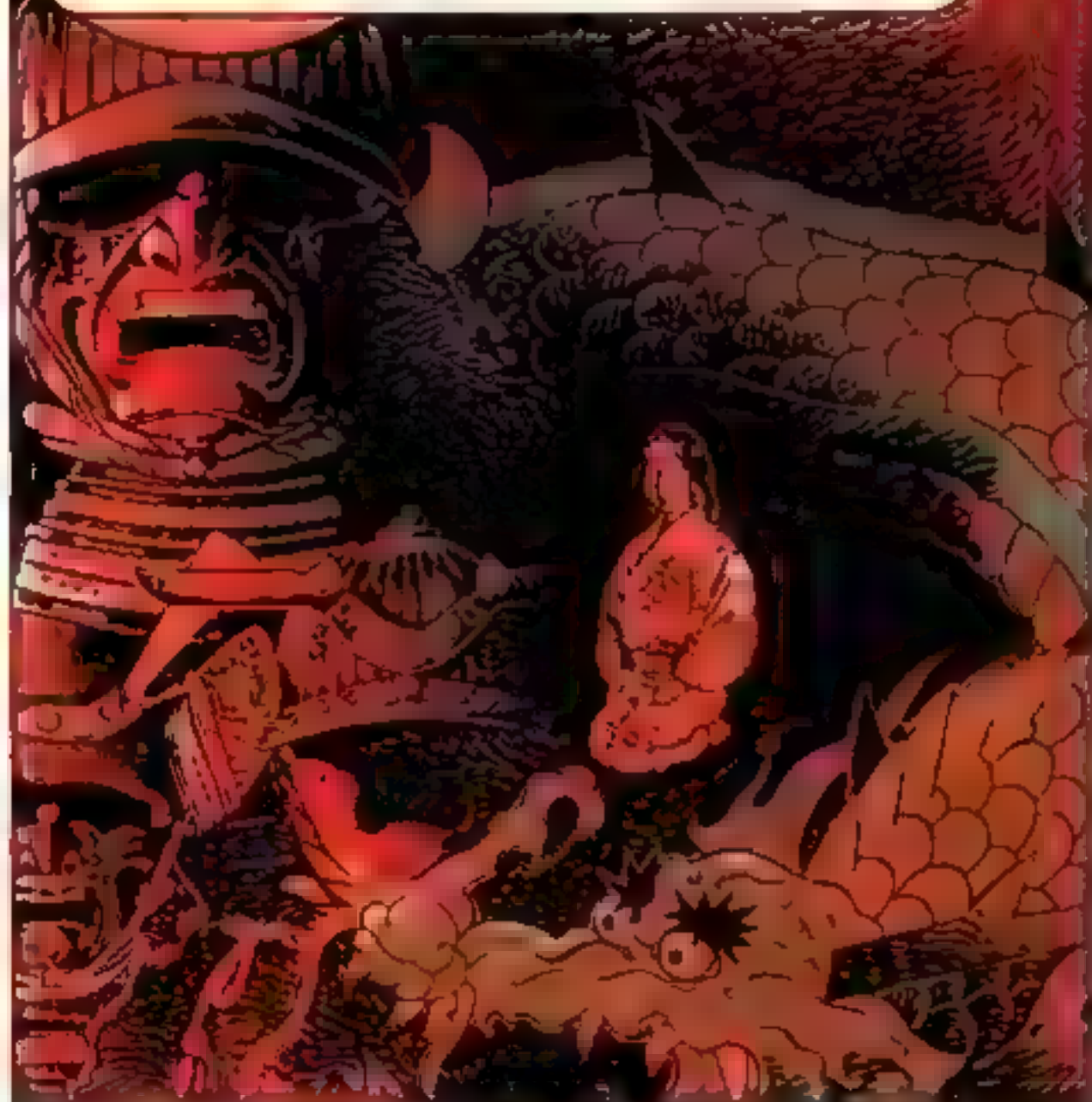
MAY HER NAME
BE BLESSED!

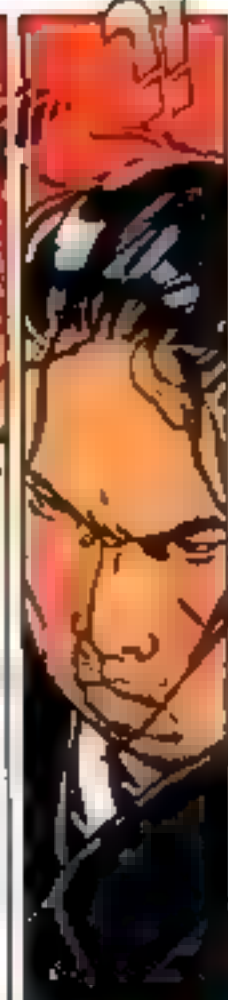


...WE, WOMEN OF THE DESTROYED CLAN, WERE DESESPERATE, BUT YAMA-NO-KAMI, THE GODDESS OF THIS MOUNTAIN, TOLD ME WHAT TO DO. SINCE THAT TIME, THIS MOUNTAIN IS FORBIDDEN TO MEN!

...THOSE FROM THE VALLEY! THE PEASANTS, MEN WHOSE LEGS ARE COVERED WITH MUD! THEY DARED TO DESTROY OUR FAMILIES! WE WILL CRUSH THEM! YAMA-NO-KAMI WILL SEE TO IT!

...THEY TRIED TO STARVE US! WE'LL PRESSURE THEM! YAMA-NO-KAMI WILL HELP US! THEY TRIED TO MAKE US LIVE IN FEAR! WE'LL TERRORIZE THEM, MY GIRL! I PROMISE YOU!

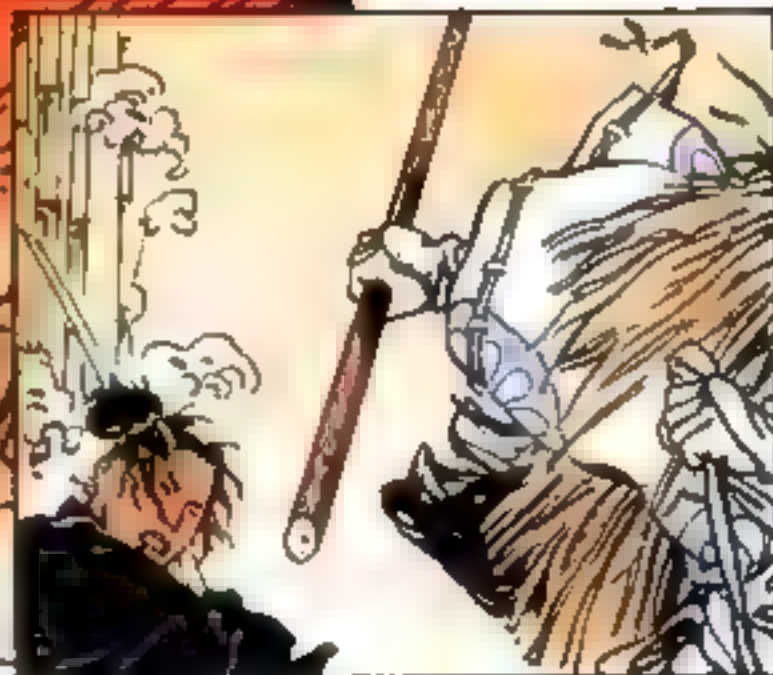




...OUR HERITAGE
IS OF HATRED AND
VENGEANCE!



LIKE YOUR SISTER,
YOU WILL BECOME THE
GODDESS'S TOOL. THE
TOOL OF THE VALLEY'S
INHABITANTS' NIGHTMARE.

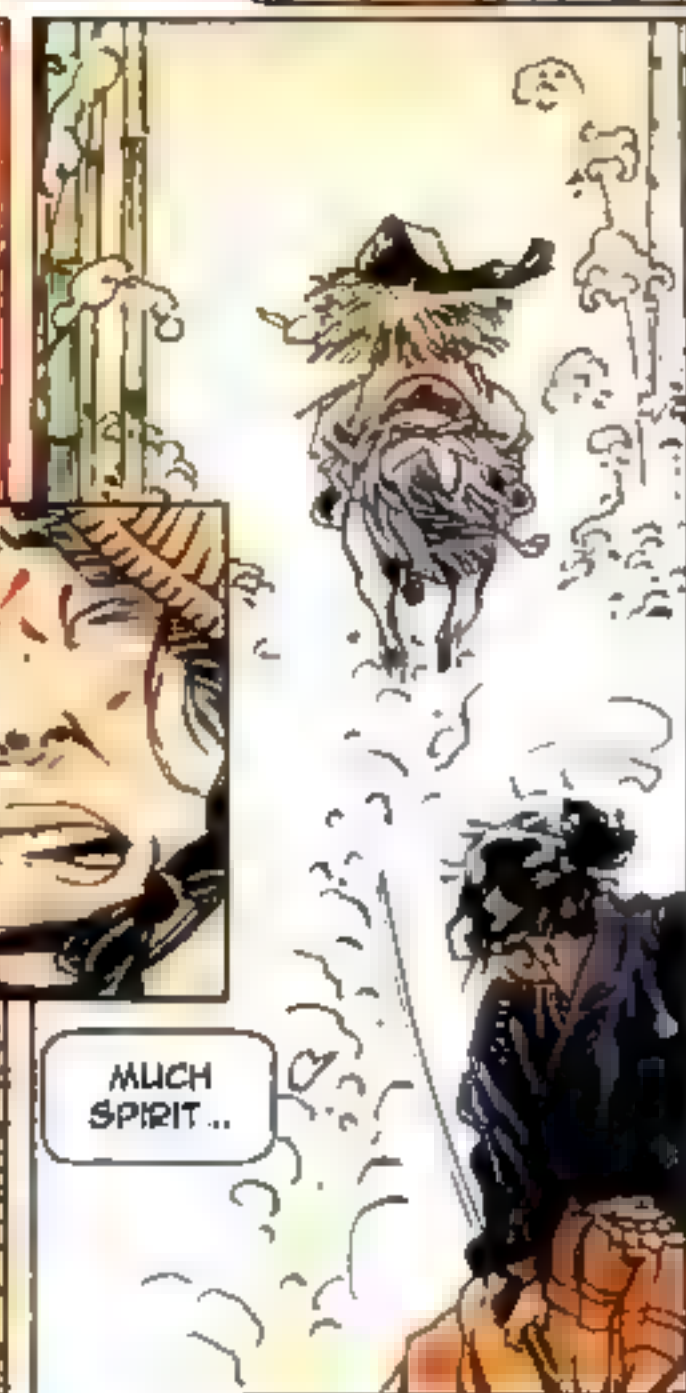
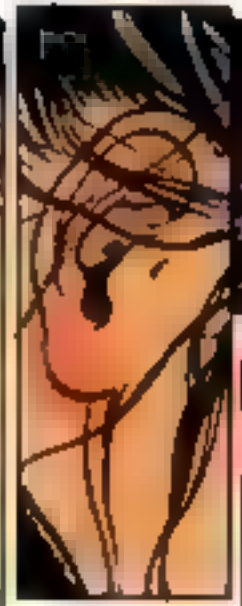




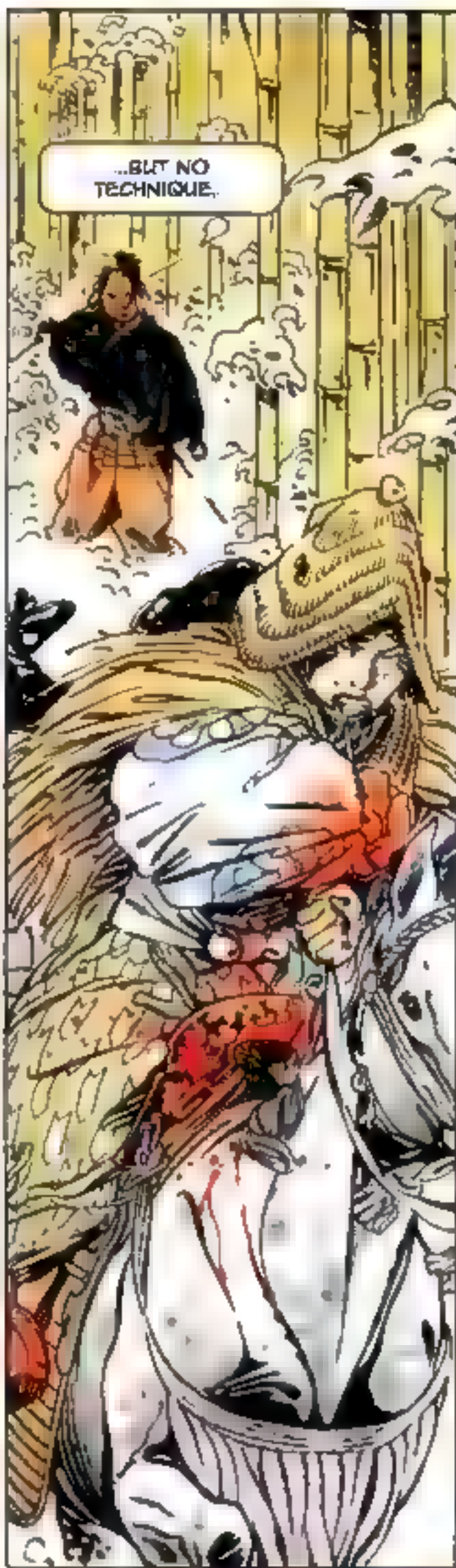
A
WOMAN
IT
WAS A
WOMAN!



WHY? WHAT'S
HAPPENING HERE?!



MUCH
SPIRIT...



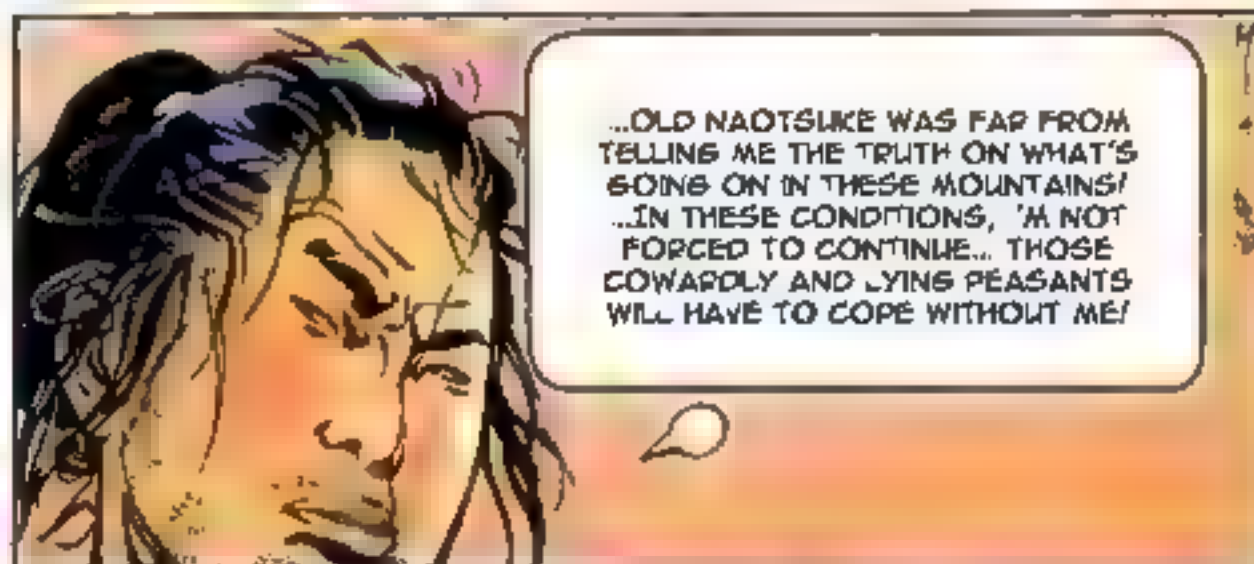
...BUT NO
TECHNIQUE.



TOO BAD
FOR HER!



PEASANTS WILLING
TO KILL ME, A
HEADLESS CORPSE,
AND NOW... THAT!



...OLD NAOTSUKE WAS FAR FROM
TELLING ME THE TRUTH ON WHAT'S
GOING ON IN THESE MOUNTAINS!
...IN THESE CONDITIONS, I'M NOT
FORCED TO CONTINUE... THOSE
COWARDLY AND LYING PEASANTS
WILL HAVE TO COPE WITHOUT ME!



I MUST GET
AWAY FROM THIS
PLACE AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE!
BUT I'M COM-
pletely LOST!

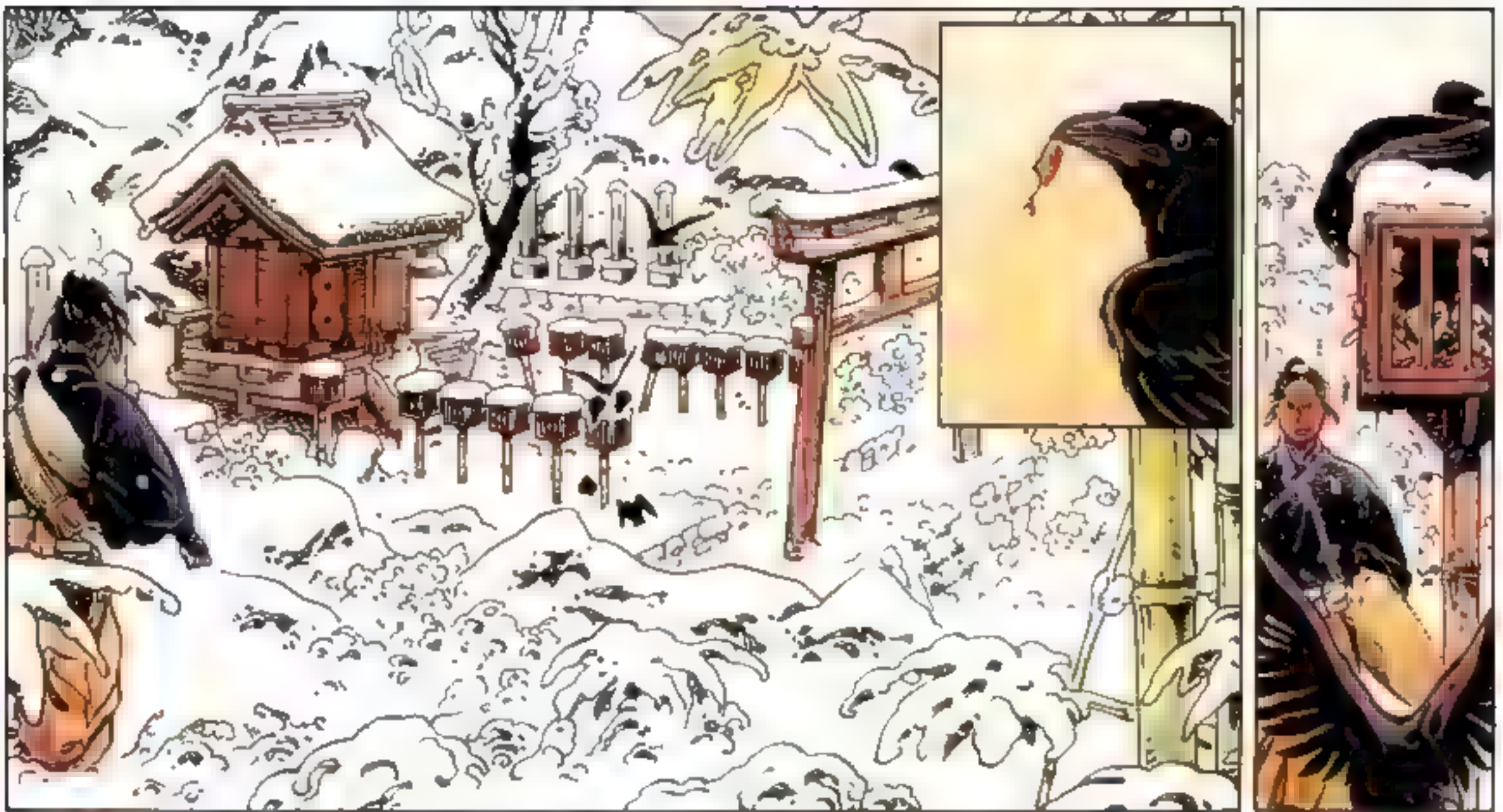


...I MUSTN'T GIVE IN TO FEAR!
THIS SUMMIT WAS ON MY LEFT YESTERDAY!
EVERYTHING LOOKS THE SAME AT NIGHT!

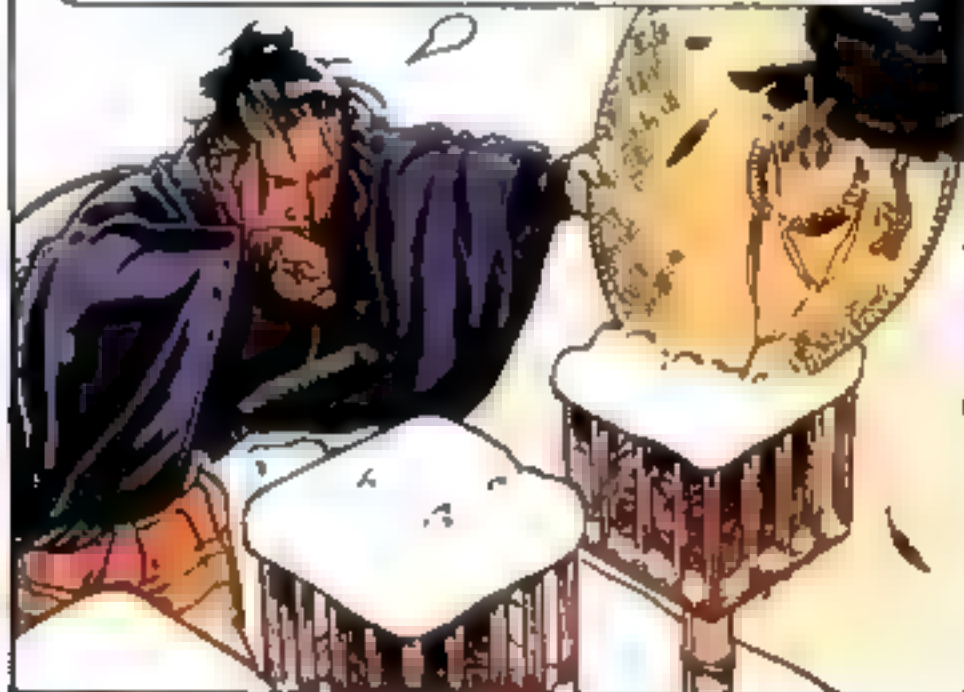


BEHIND THIS FOREST OF
BAMBOOS I SHOULD BE
ABLE TO SEE SOMETHING!

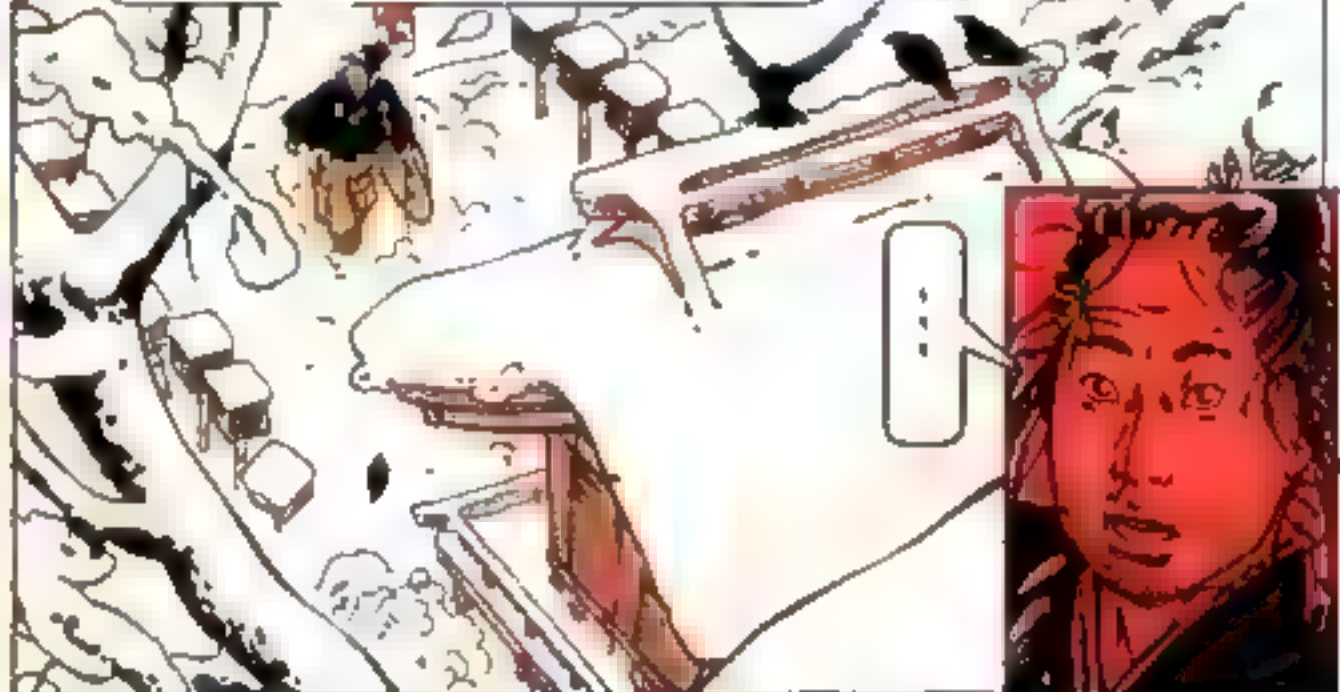




MMH.. TOO ODD TO BE A COINCIDENCE,
IT MUST BE THE HEAD OF THE MAN I
DISCOVERED YESTERDAY! BUT WHY DID
THEY HUMILIATE HIM IN SUCH A WAY?!



AND THE OTHER ONES... SAMURAI? ..LOST
TRAVELERS? IT LOOKS LIKE SACRIFICES. WHO
COULD HONOUR THE SPIRITS IN SUCH A WAY?!
IT'S DISGUSTING!



THE
KASUMI'S
MON!



...MY FATE IS STRANGE.. YESTERDAY ALL
I KNEW ABOUT THAT NAME WAS AN ODD
STORY... AND A GOLD COIN... WHAT KIND OF
SITUATION DID I GET INVOLVED IN?!



BUT WHY THIS? ..
SINCE WHEN? I WANT
TO UNDERSTAND...



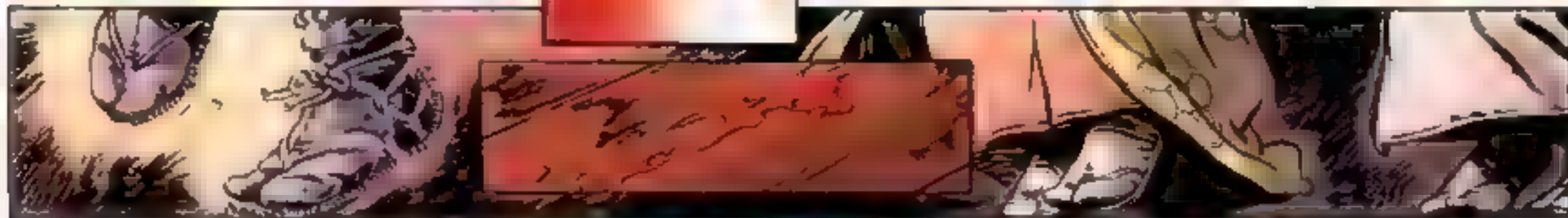
...THE TRACES LEFT BY THE
FEMALE RIDER WILL LEAD ME
TO THE PLACE WHERE I CAN
FIND THE ANSWERS!



. I HAVE TO KNOW!

In the wintery rice field,
lifted and thrown there,
a red torii.

Buon



OUR SISTER WILL DIE IF
WE DON'T DO ANYTHING!

IT DOESN'T MATTER!
ONLY SERVING THE
GODDESS IS IMPORTANT!

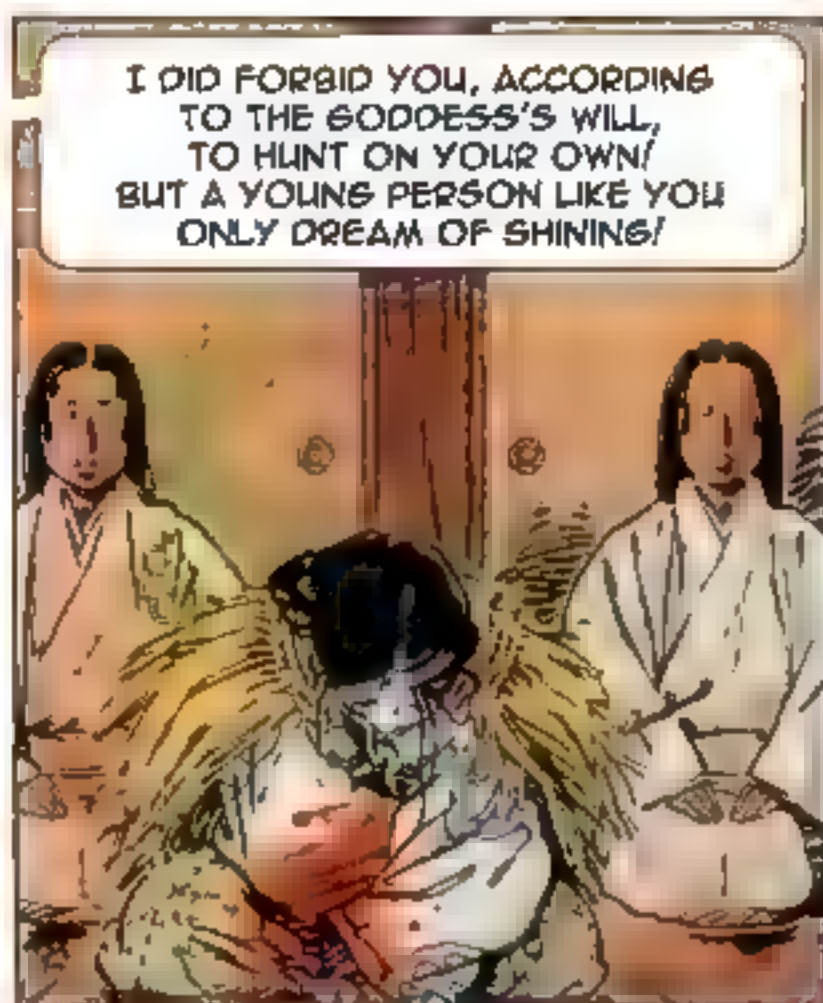




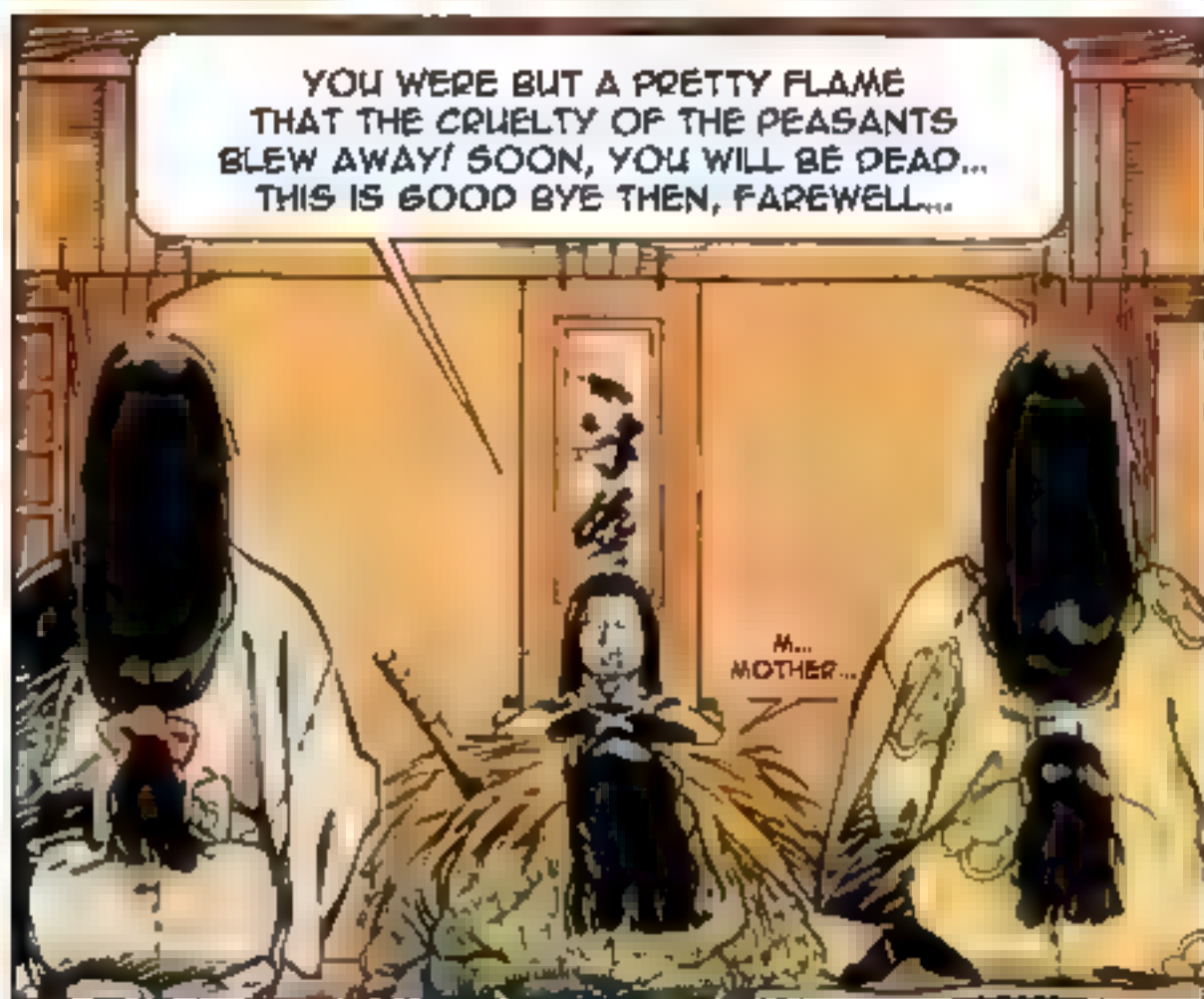
IKKO .. MY
PRETTY MUSICIAN...



...NOW WHO'LL PLAY AS
WELL AS YOU DID, WHEN THE
NIGHT COMES? ...AH! ALL THIS
BLOOD... SUCH A WASTE!

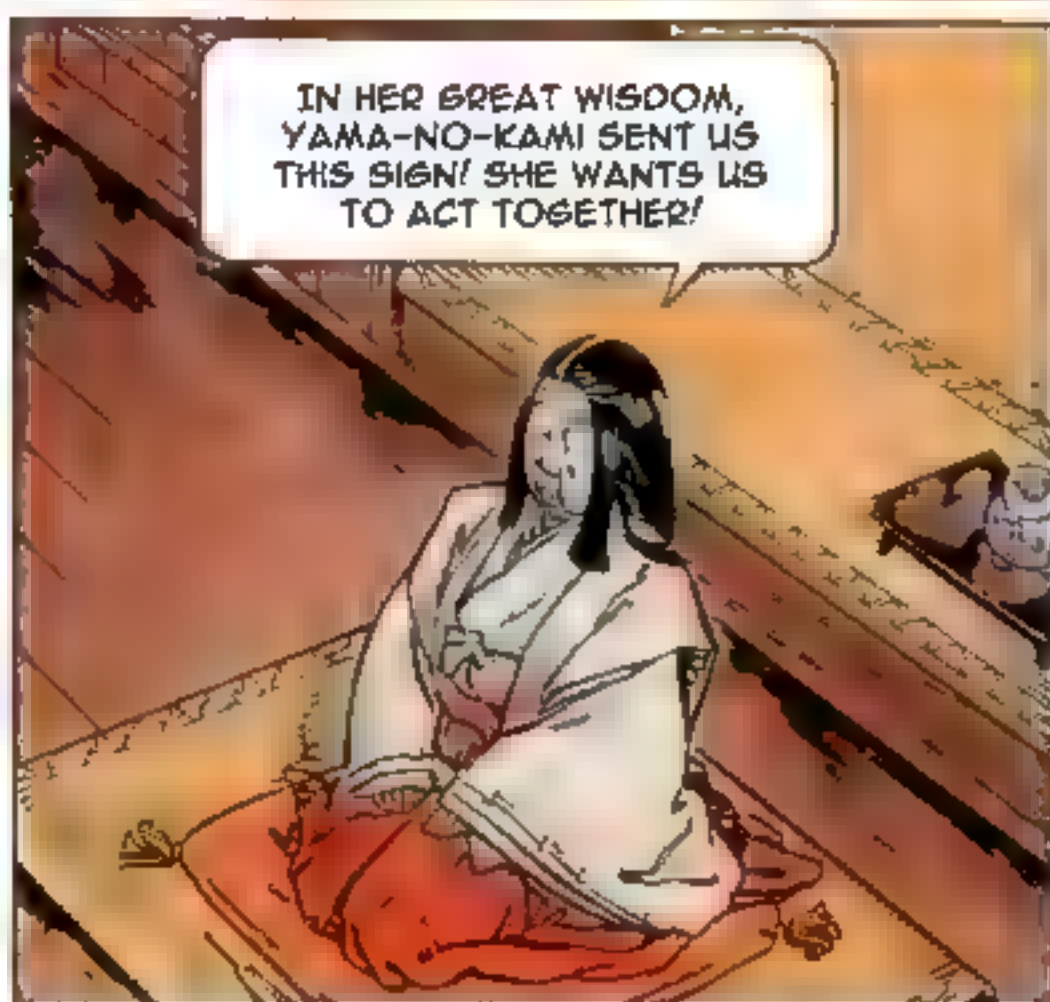


I DID FORBID YOU, ACCORDING
TO THE GODDESS'S WILL,
TO HUNT ON YOUR OWN!
BUT A YOUNG PERSON LIKE YOU
ONLY DREAM OF SHINING!



YOU WERE BUT A PRETTY FLAME
THAT THE CRUELTY OF THE PEASANTS
BLEW AWAY! SOON, YOU WILL BE DEAD...
THIS IS GOOD BYE THEN, FAREWELL...

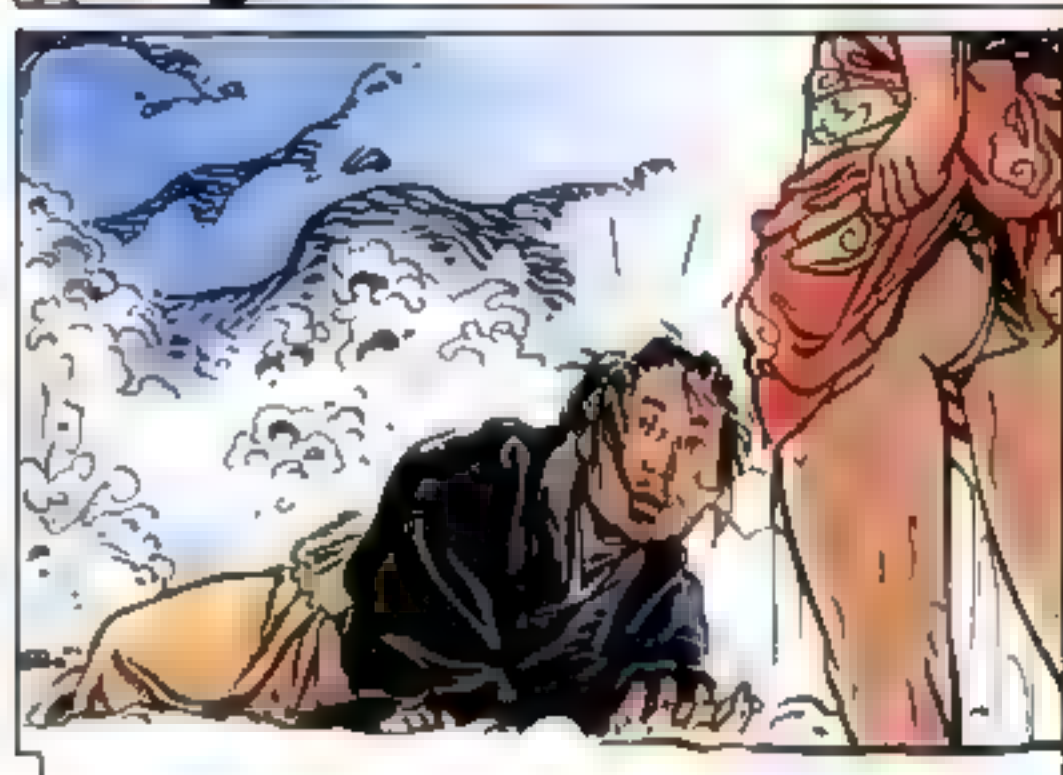
M...
MOTHER...

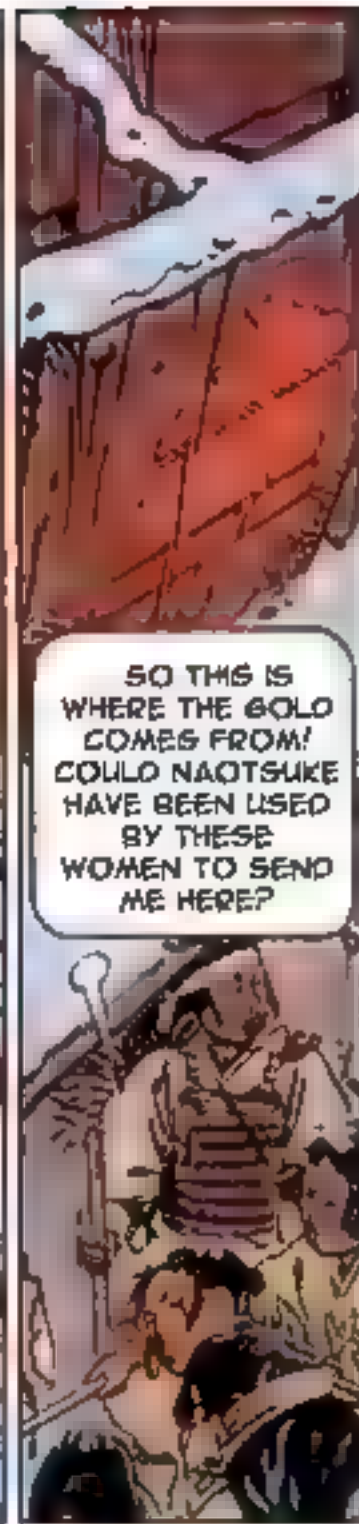
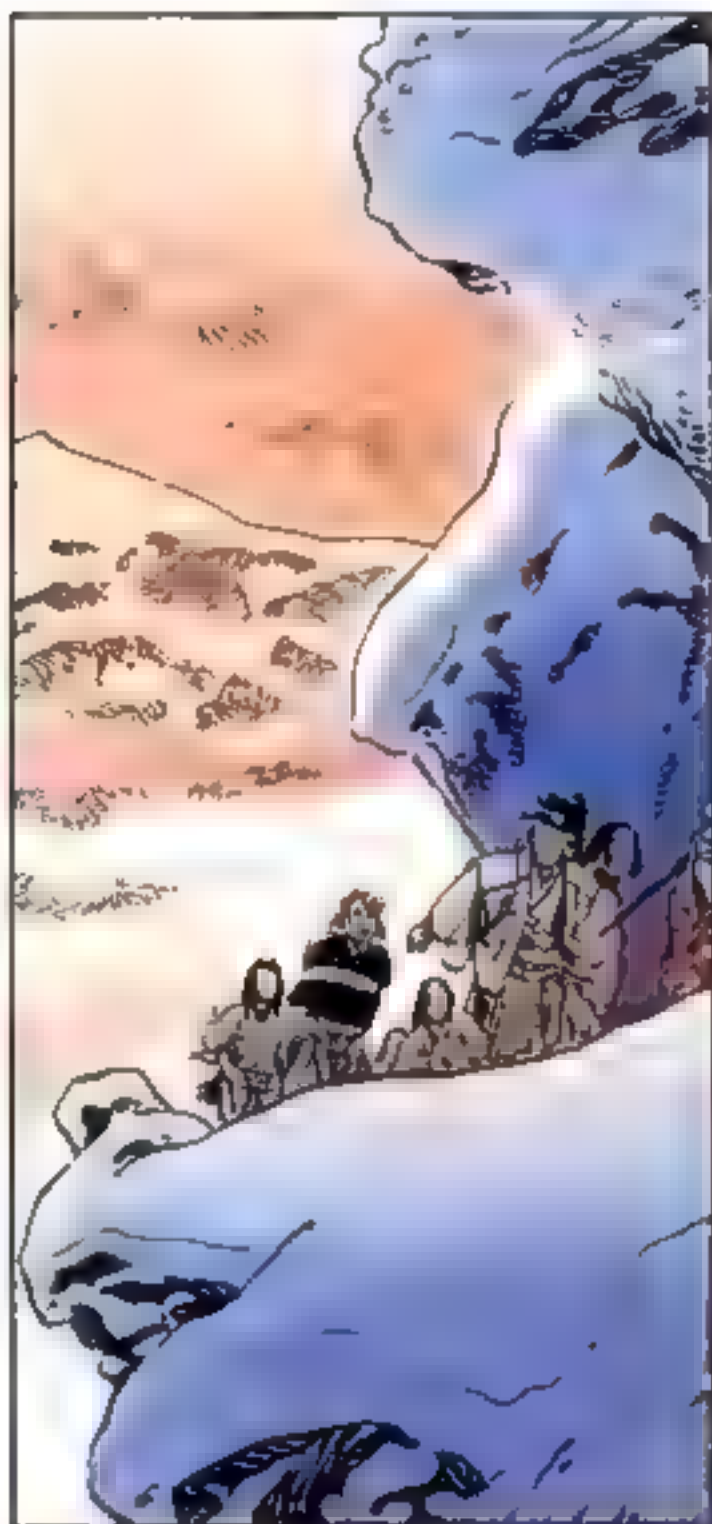


IN HER GREAT WISDOM,
YAMA-NO-KAMI SENT US
THIS SIGN! SHE WANTS US
TO ACT TOGETHER!

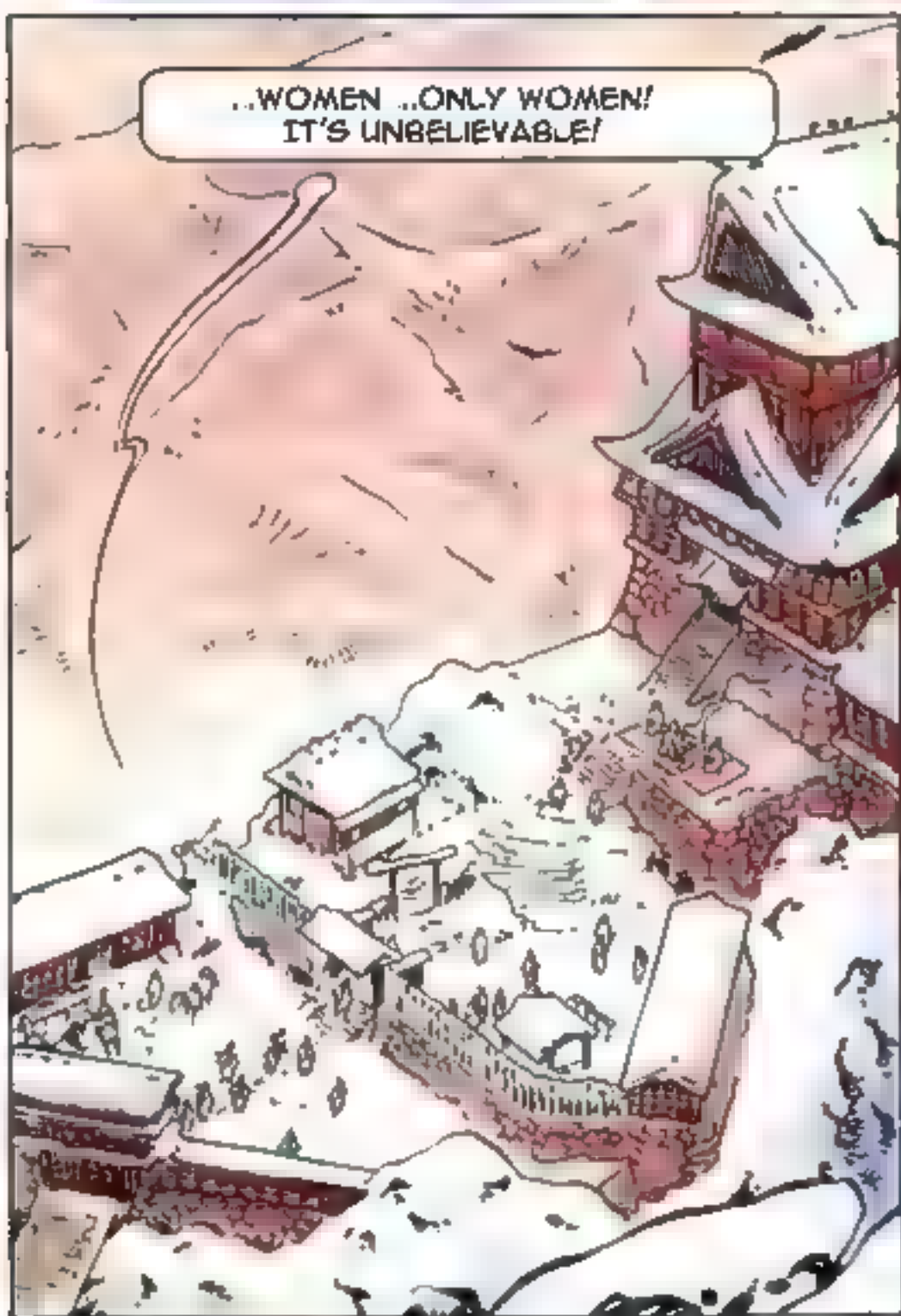


...GO! ...GATHER YOUR SISTERS!

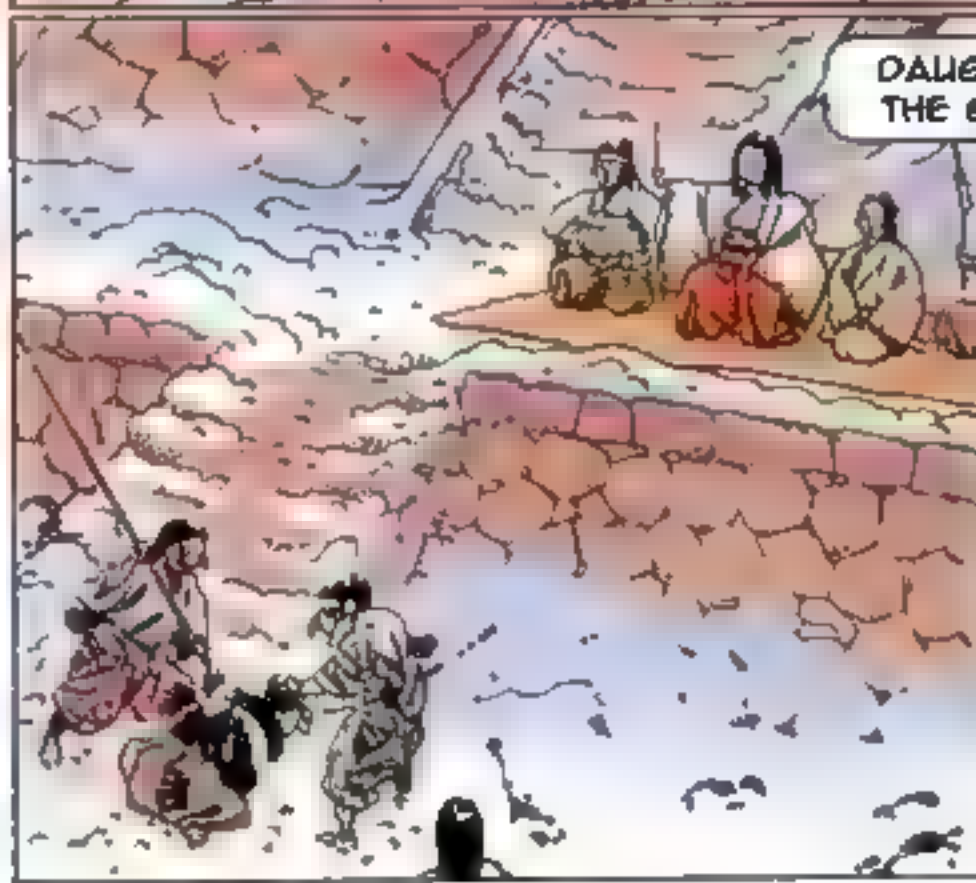




SO THIS IS
WHERE THE GOLD
COMES FROM!
COULD NAOTSUKE
HAVE BEEN USED
BY THESE
WOMEN TO SEND
ME HERE?



...WOMEN ..ONLY WOMEN!
IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!



DAUGHTERS OF
THE GODDESS!



THE COWARDLY MEN FROM THE VALLEY
KILLED THE NOBLE MEN FROM THE HILLS!
YAMA-NO-KAMI'S LAW ORDERS US TO
RESTORE THE BROKEN BALANCE! THIS
MAN STAINED OUR HEAVENLY VIRGINITY!
HE WHO INFRINGES THE TABOO OF
THE MOUNTAIN MUST DIE!

TOMOMI!

...HOWEVER, MY DAUGHTERS, THIS
MAN IS A SAMURAI! HE WILL NOT DIE
IN A SHAMEFUL WAY, HE WILL BE
ALLOWED TO RUN FOR HIS LIFE. THAT
WAY WE WILL RESTORE THE BALANCE!

IF HE REACHES THE VALLEY,
TA-NO-KAMI'S TERRITORY, HE
WILL LIVE. THE HUNT CAN BEGIN!

SAMURAI!
WHEN THE SUN
GOES BEHIND
THE HILLS,
MY DAUGHTERS
WILL HUNT YOU!
NOW RUN!

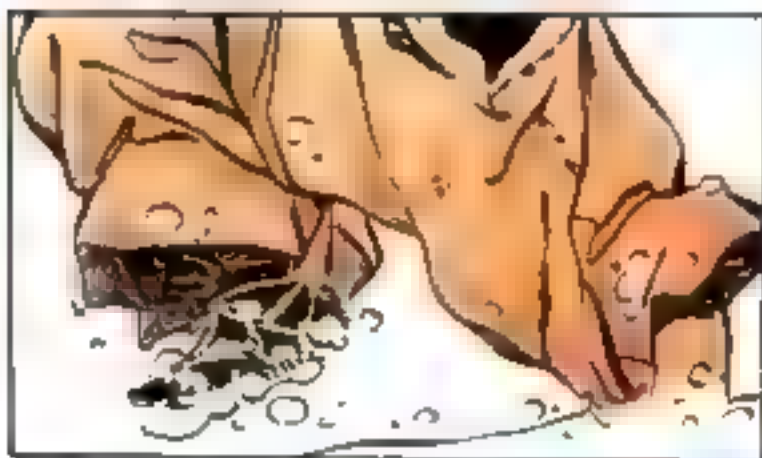
BUT

I GET IT..

OUTSIDE..
I'M OUTSIDE!
KEEP RUNNING.
DON'T THINK..
LATER...

SOON, YOU TOO
WILL BE ALLOWED
TO HUNT FOR
THE GODDESS!

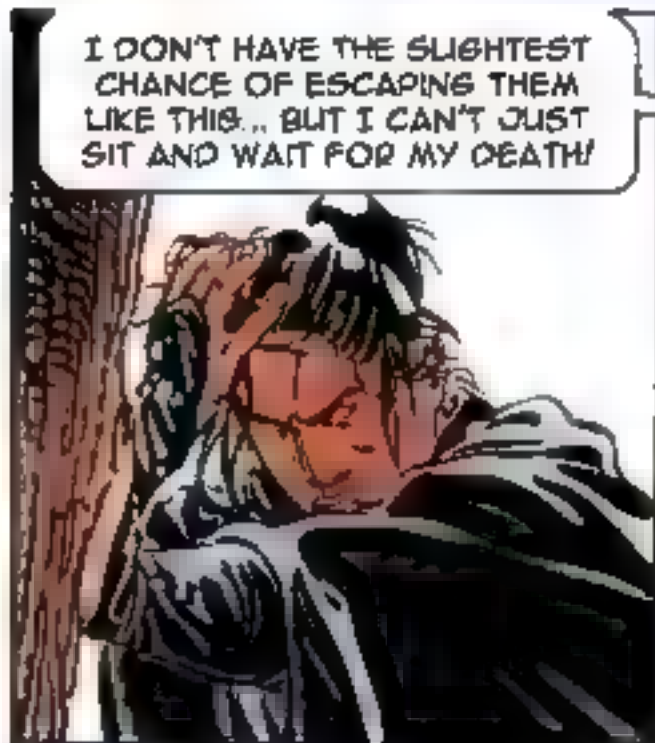
Among the trees of winter
When the axe strokes
The fragrance filled me.
Bushman.



I HAVEN'T RUN ONE
HUNDREDTH OF THE DIS-
TANCE AND I'M ALREADY
OUT OF BREATH! FLEEING
IS POINTLESS!



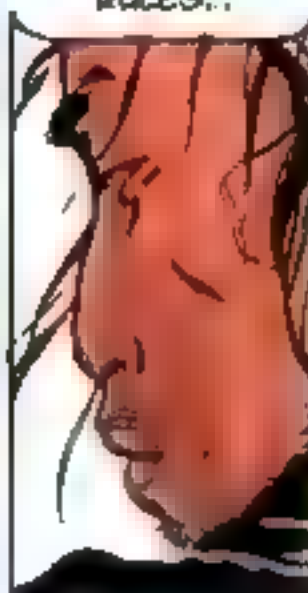
I DON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST
CHANCE OF ESCAPING THEM
LIKE THIS... BUT I CAN'T JUST
SIT AND WAIT FOR MY DEATH!



...DON'T PANIC!
I MUSN'T PANIC!



THE OLD WOMAN
MENTIONED
INFRINGING THE
RULES...



...YES ...THAT'S WHAT I
MUST DO... REVERSE THE
PROCESS, REFUSE TO ACT
LIKE A HUNTED BEAST!



...I WILL
FIGHT!
I WILL
ATTACK
THEM!





NAMIKOP? ...HAVE YOU SEEN NAMIKOP?

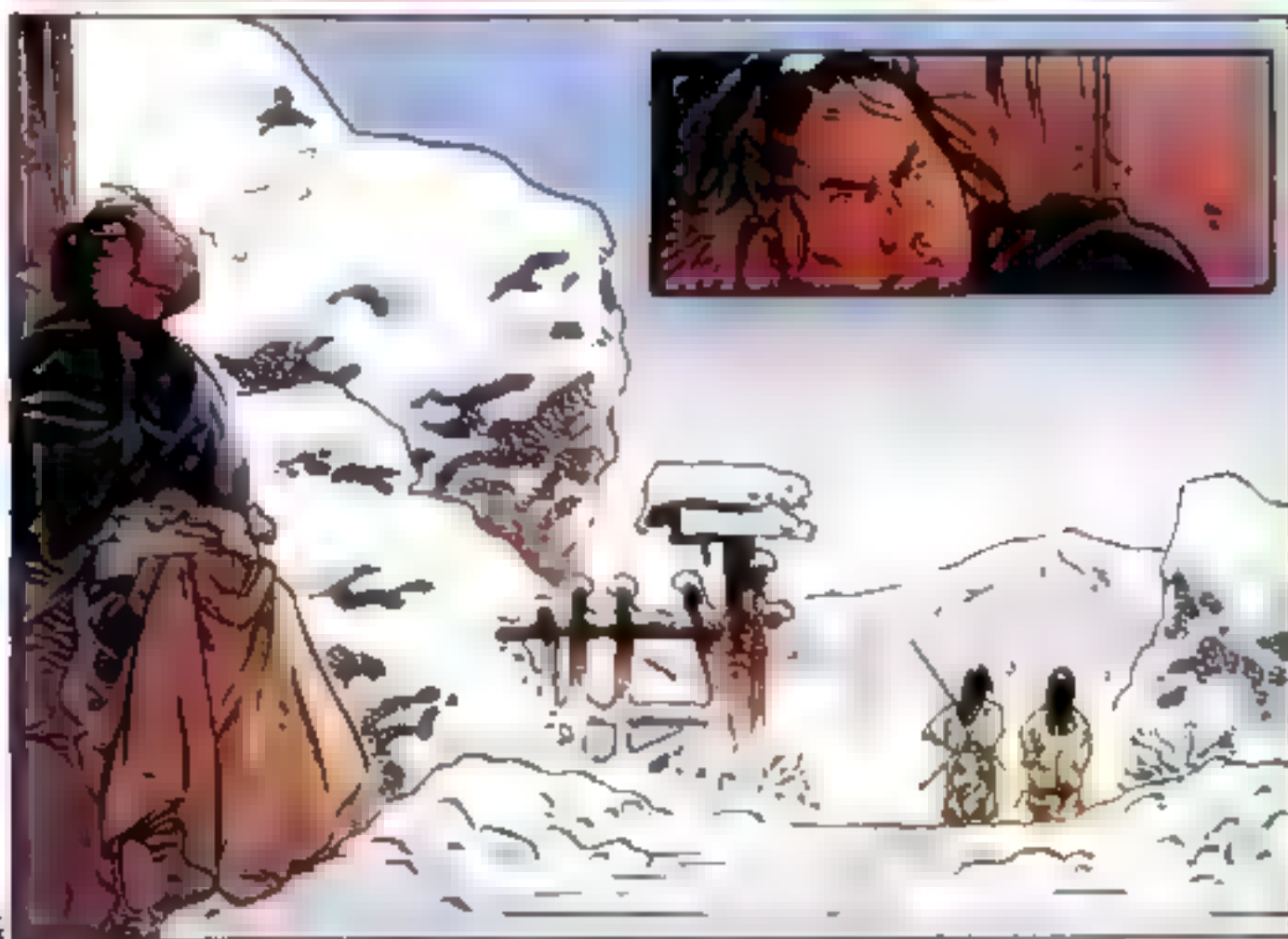
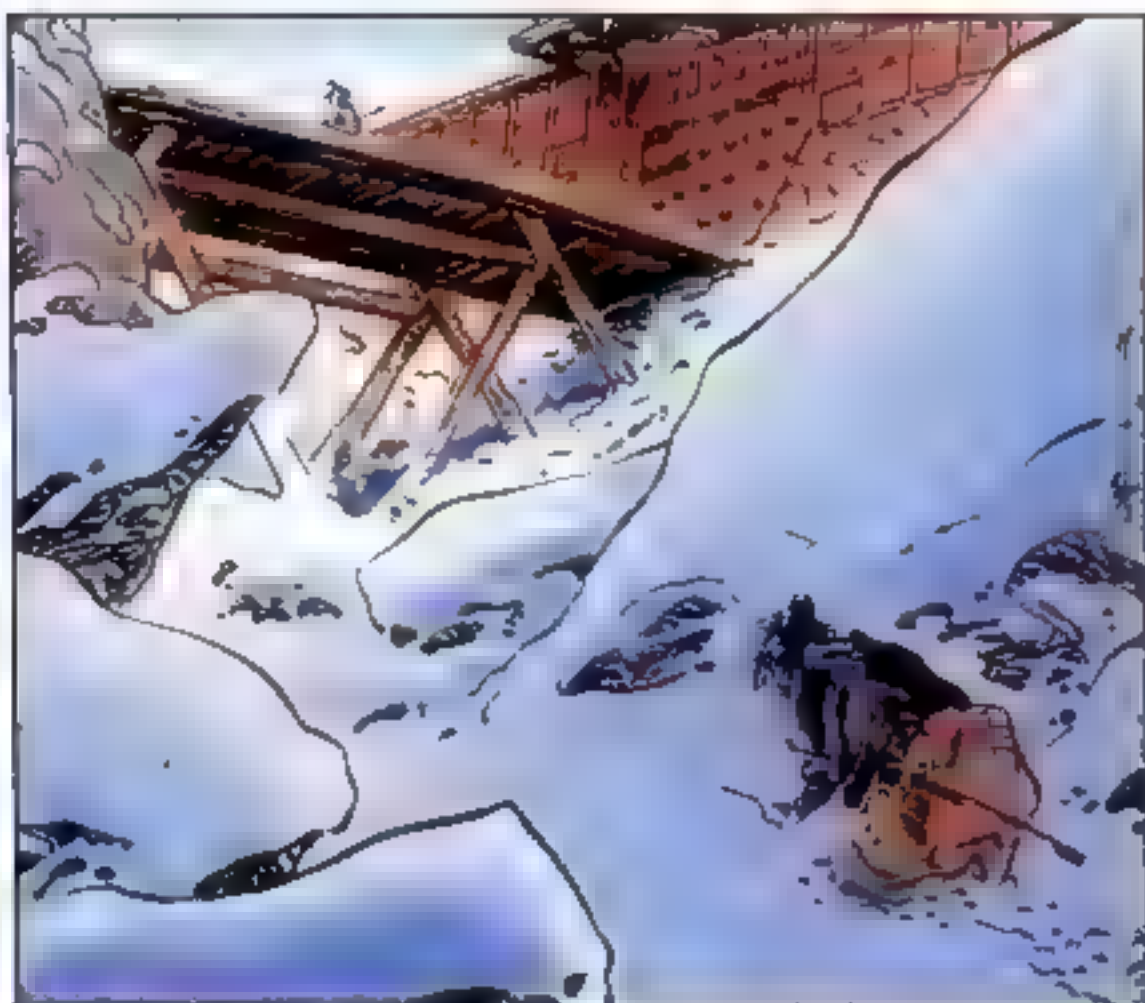
NO! SHE WAS BEHIND US...



ANOTHER ONE WHO PREFERS HUNTING ON HER OWN, WISHING TO KEEP ALL THE HONOURS OF HER CAPTURE! FOOL!



...UNLESS...





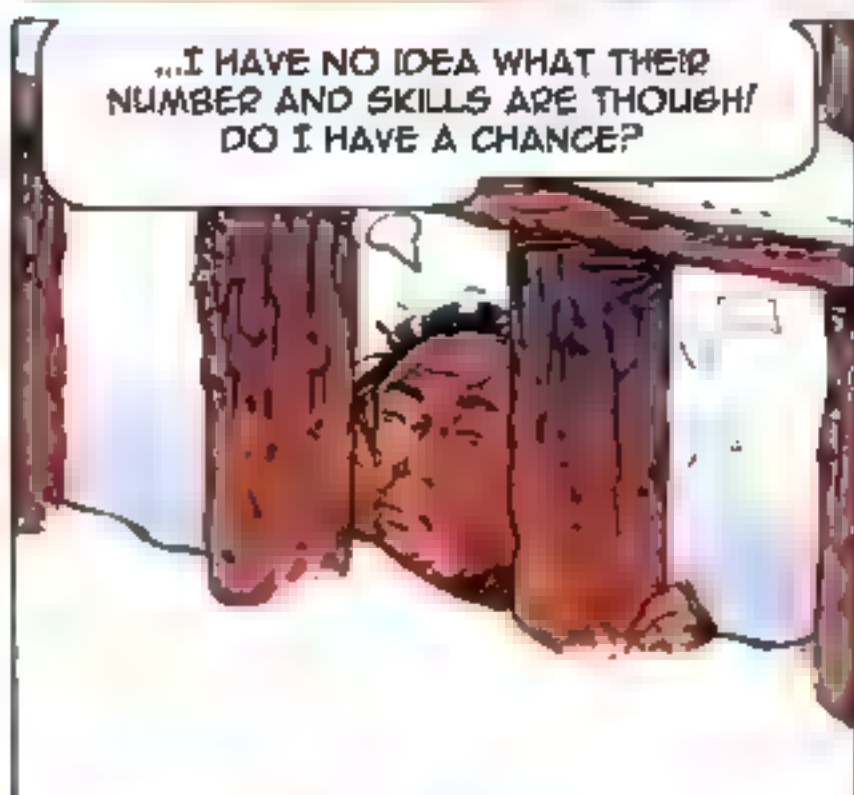
EXCEPT FOR THE TWO
GUARDS, IT'S DESERT! THEY
MUST BE REALLY CONFIDENT!



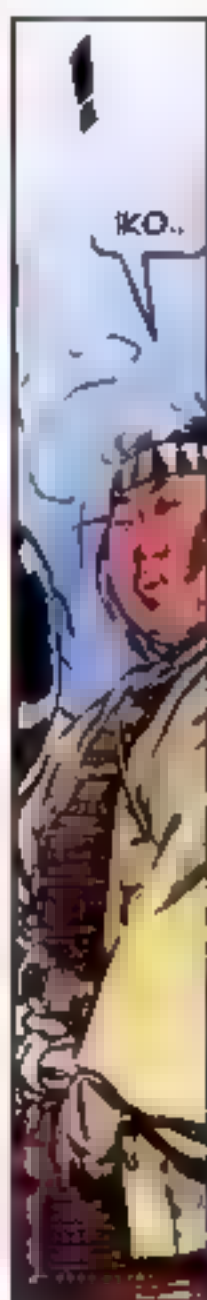
...AS FOR THE OTHERS ...I'M
LUCKY! THEY SEEM TO BE
FOCUSED ON THE VALLEY!



I MUST ACT
QUICKLY! THEY WON'T
CHASE ME FOR EVER..



...I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEIR
NUMBER AND SKILLS ARE THOUGH!
DO I HAVE A CHANCE?



IKO..

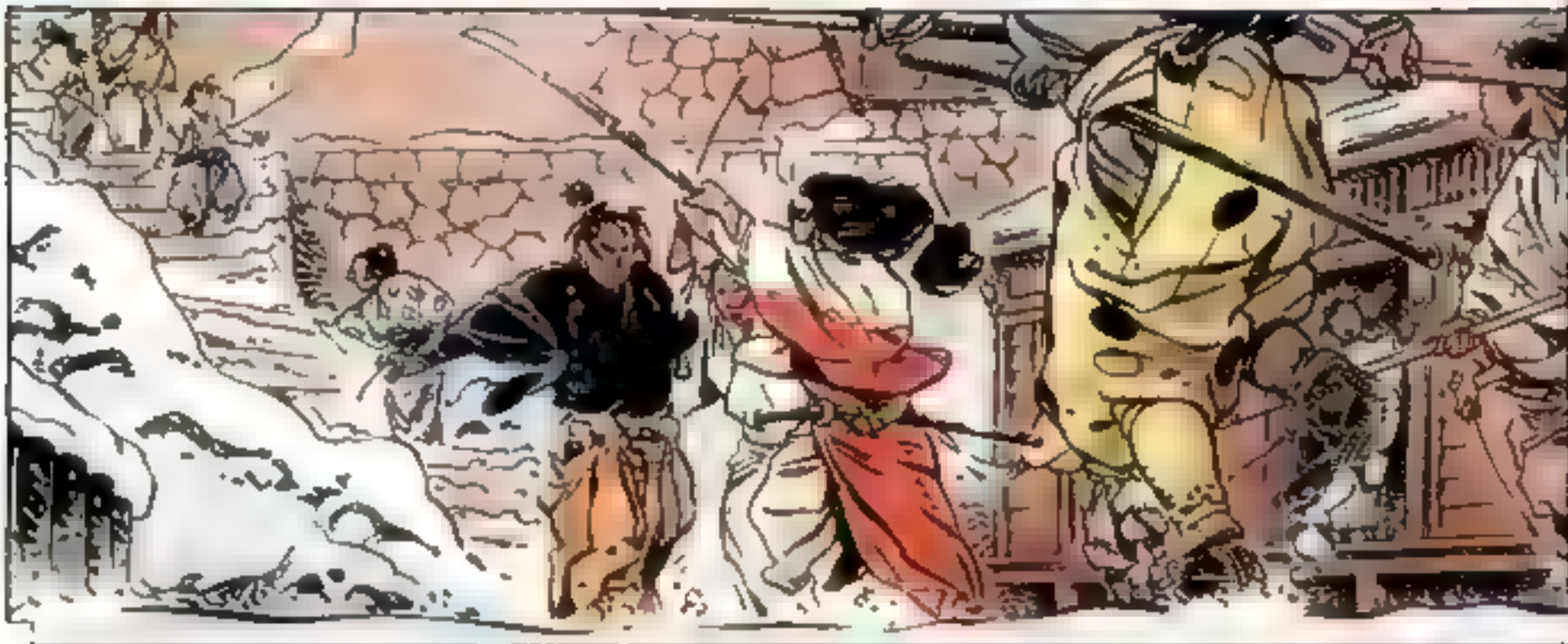
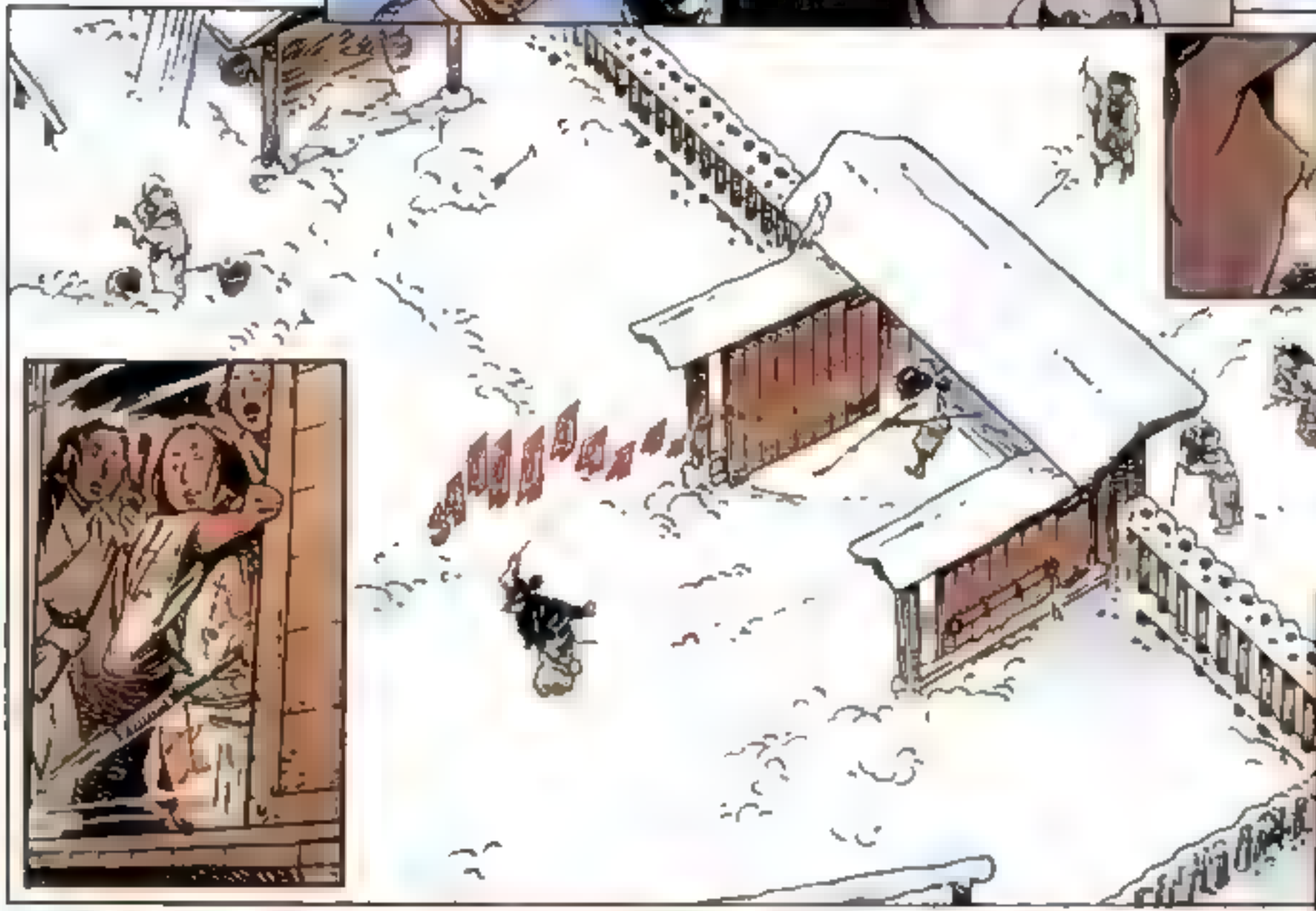
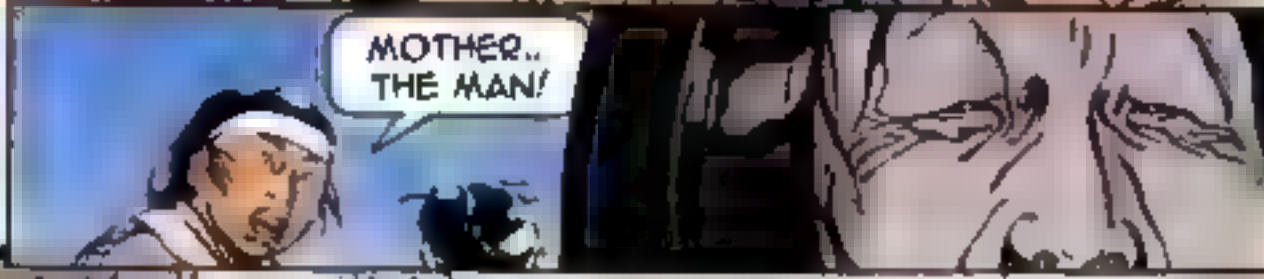
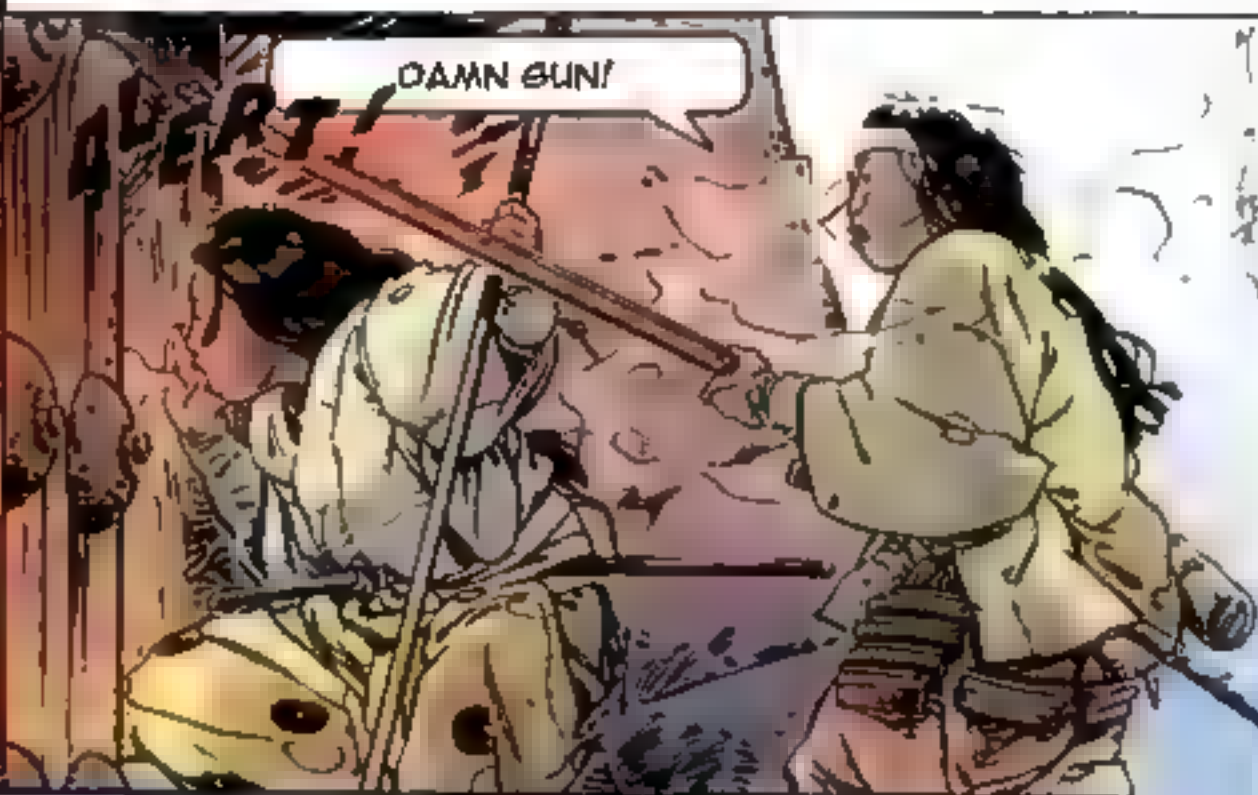


AAAH?

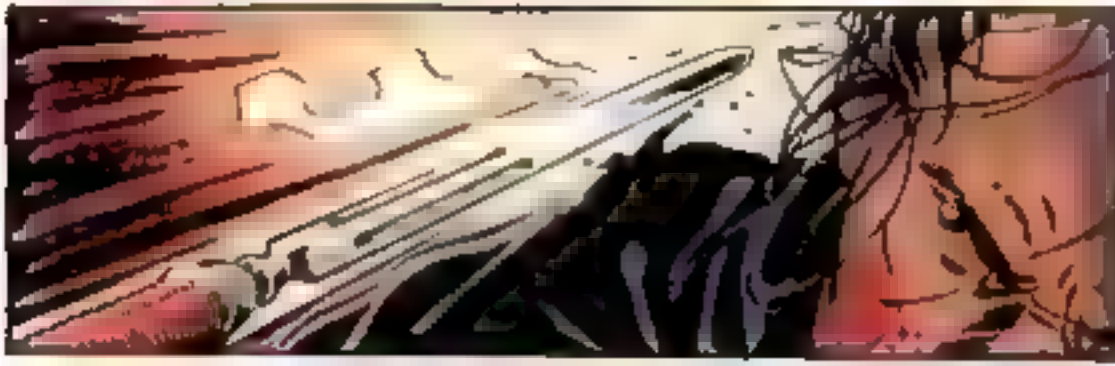
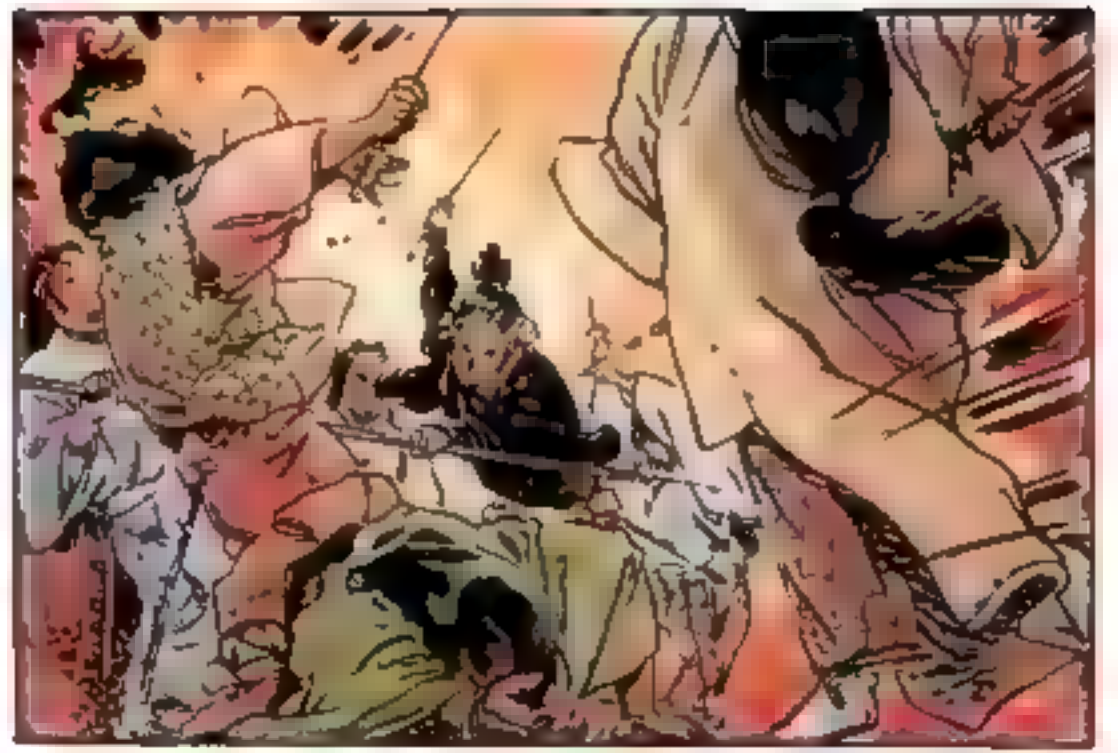
HUSH.



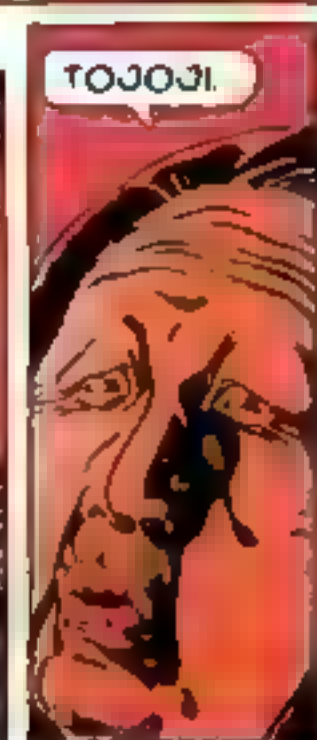
IF I COULD USE
THEIR LEADER AS
A HOSTAGE...
IT MUST BE THAT
OLD WOMAN!











...THE GODDESS SENT ME
A SIGN... A VISION!



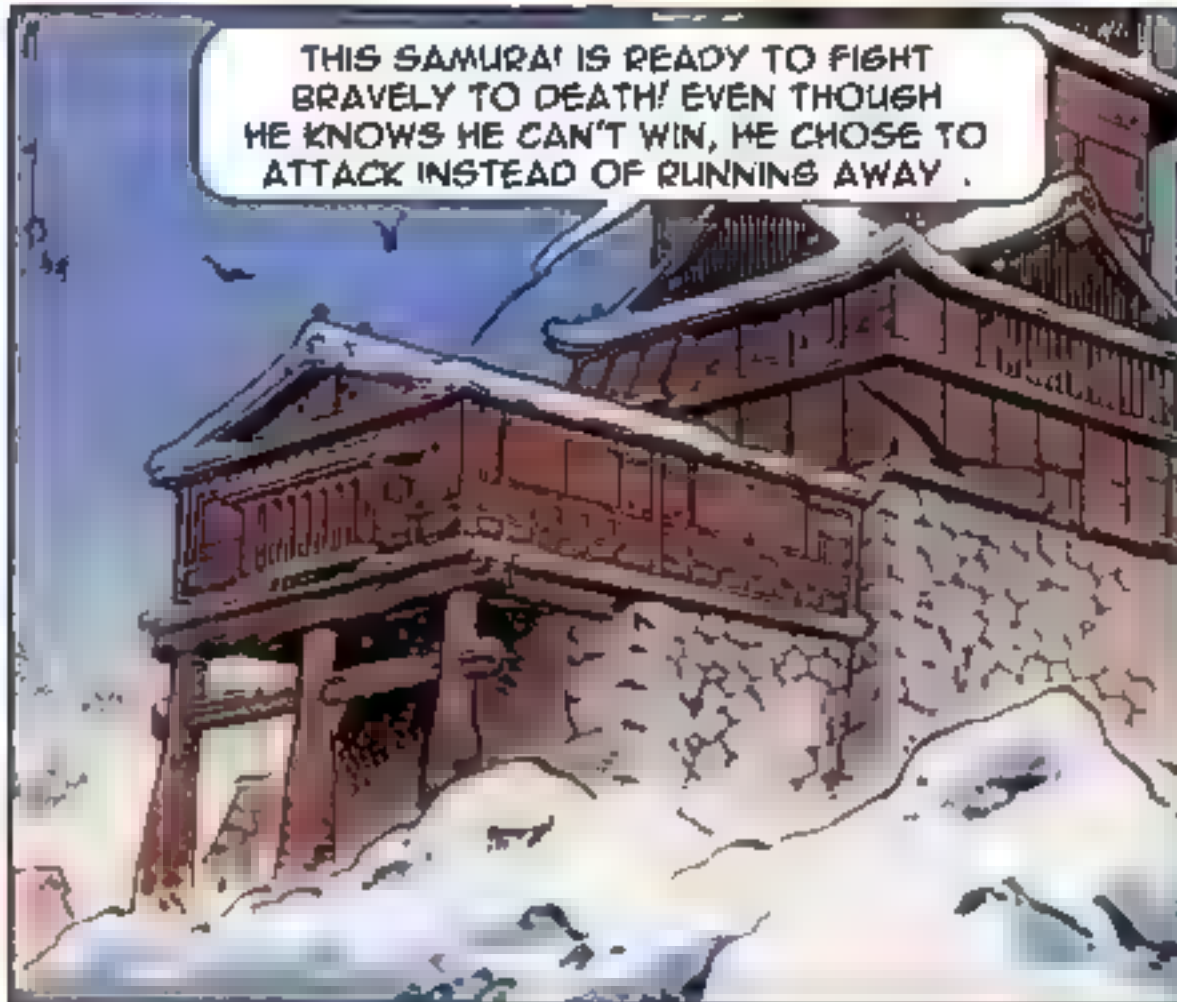
I SAW THE MASSACRE
OF OUR CLAN FORTY
YEARS AGO ONCE AGAIN!
VILE PEASANTS WERE
KILLING MY HUSBAND,
MY BROTHERS,
MY SONS...



ALAS, WE WERE
THOSE PEASANTS,
AND THIS SAMURAI!
ONE OF MY SONS! DO
YOU NOT SEE HOW
IRONIC THIS IS? TOO
MUCH BLOOD HAS
BEEN SHED!



THIS SAMURAI IS READY TO FIGHT
BRAVELY TO DEATH! EVEN THOUGH
HE KNOWS HE CAN'T WIN, HE CHOSE TO
ATTACK INSTEAD OF RUNNING AWAY.



...HE IS THE SAME AS WE ARE!
OUR KIND! A PREDATOR! FOXES
MUSN'T KILL EACH OTHERS!



COME CLOSER ..



DO NOT FEAR! LET MY
CHILD COME TO ME!



MOTHER!





YES... YES! IT IS YOU, TOJOJI, MY SON! DID THEY HURT YOU? IT WAS THOSE PEASANTS, AGAIN? THOSE WRETCHED SWINES!



IT MUST BE OYABUN'S DOING ONCE AGAIN! OR OLD NAOTSUKE! THOSE TWO... ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SLAUGHTER OF OUR FAMILY! LONG AGO...



I... IF I CAME HERE TODAY AND... TOOK SO MANY RISKS... IT WAS TO BRING TOMOMI BACK!



...TOMOMI?

NO!



...LET ME STAY HERE, SAMURAI! I WANT TO STAY HERE! I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO THAT VALLEY OF MISERY... I DON'T WANT TO BE HUNGRY OR SUFFER FROM THE COLO AGAIN!



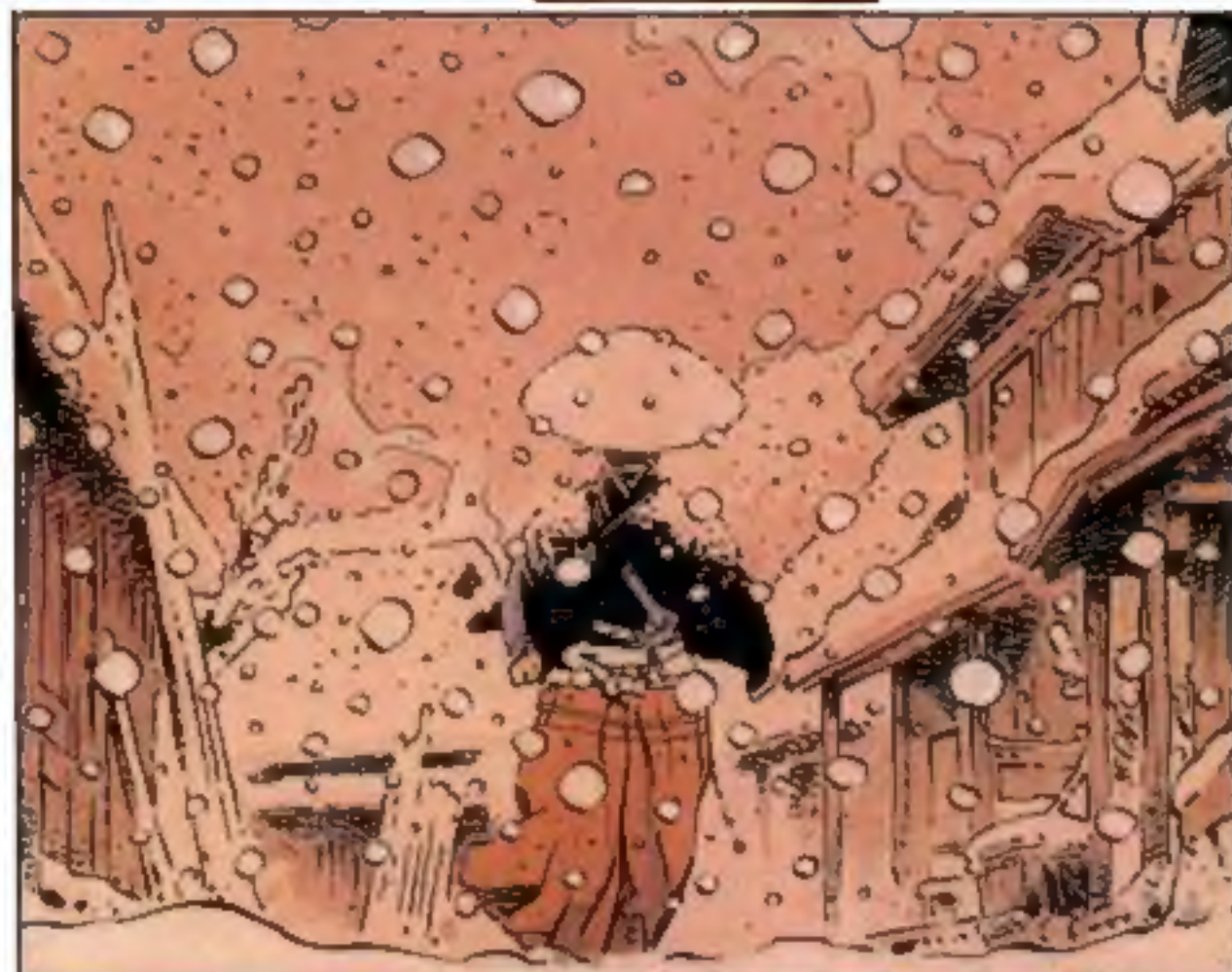
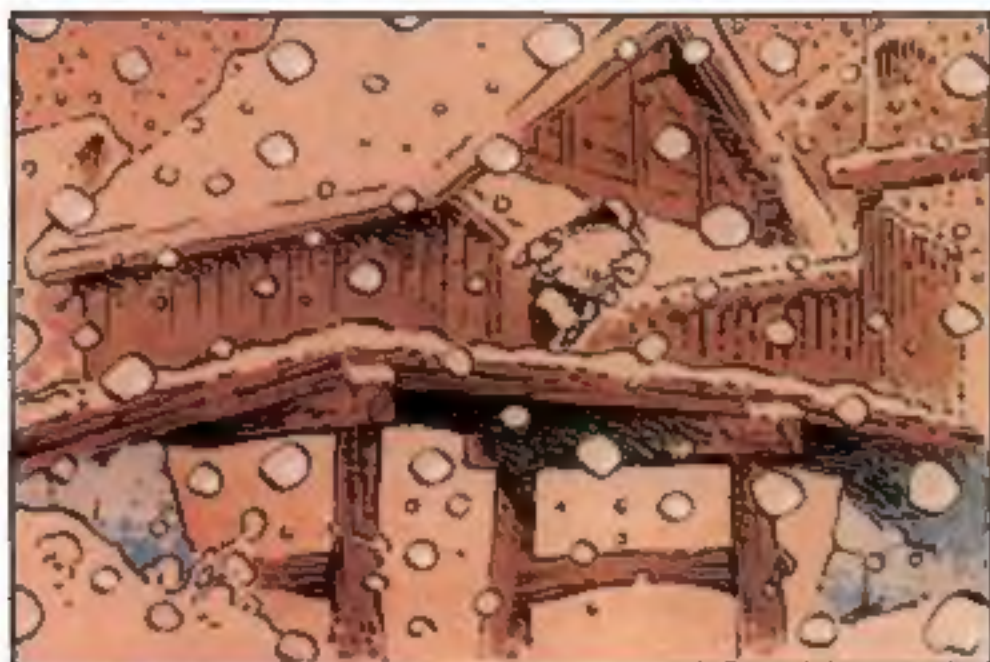
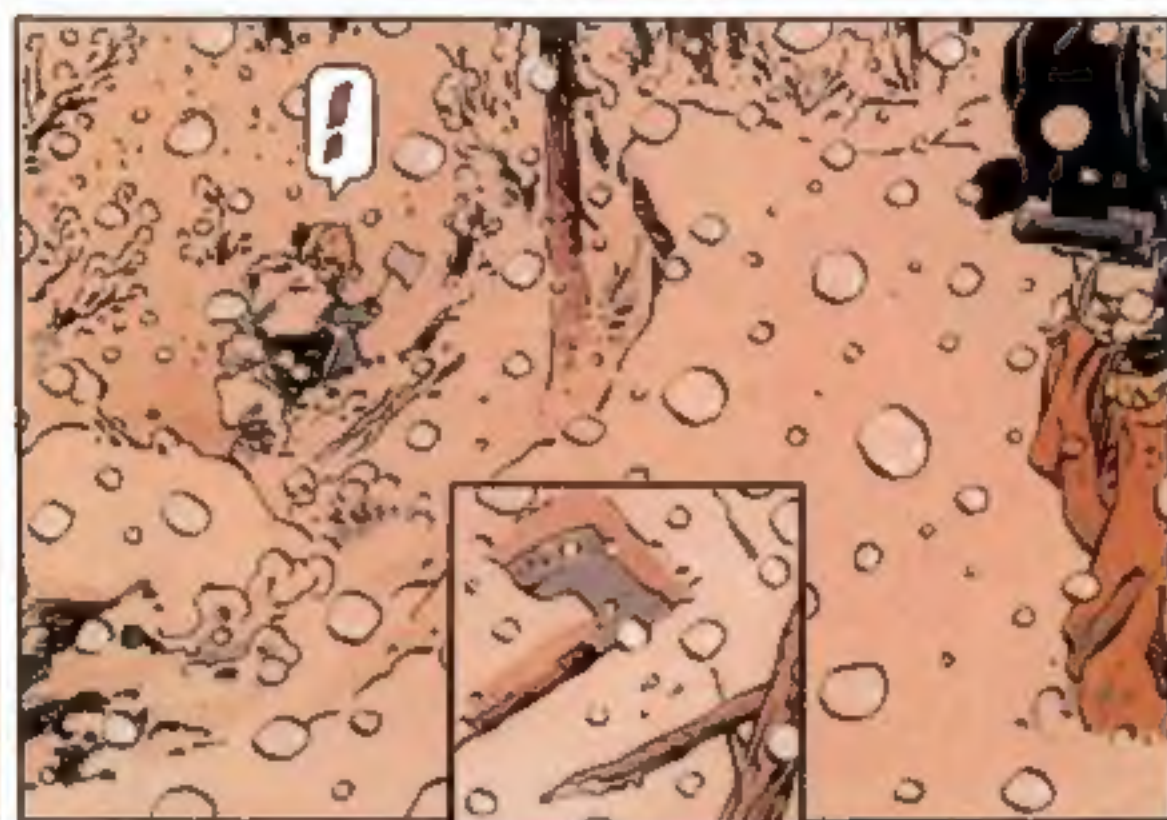
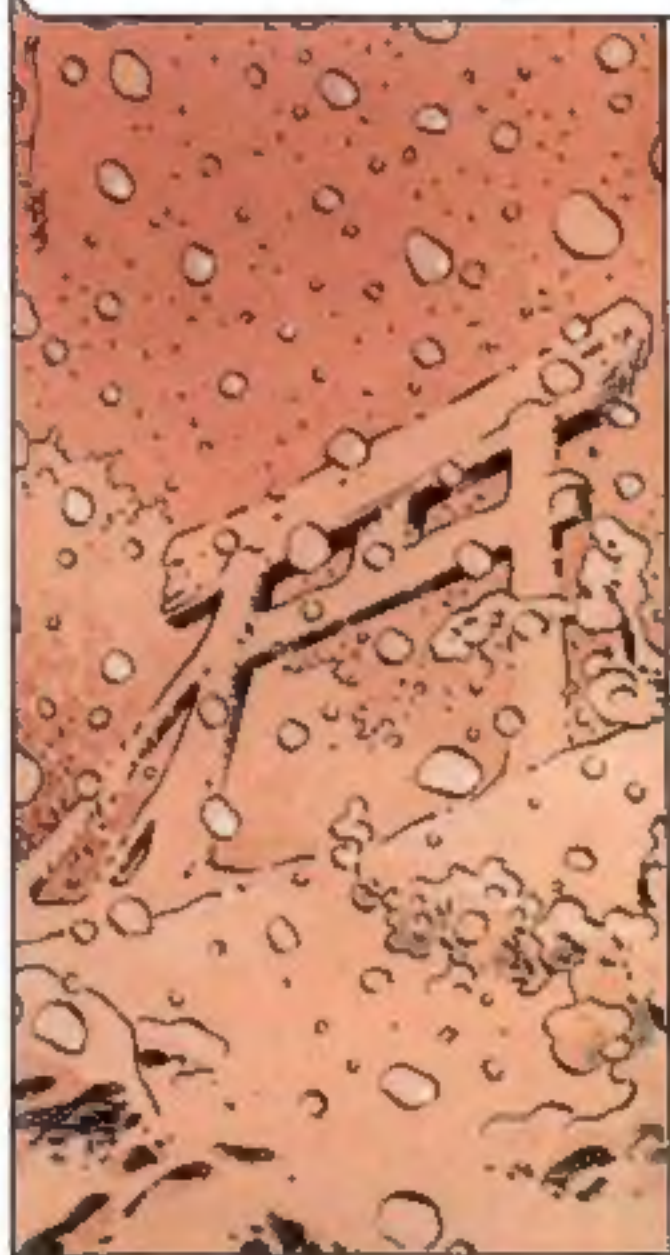
I BELONG HERE, NOW!



...I ...I HAVE PROBABLY BEEN... STUPID...



And now
Let us contemplate the snow
Until we fall from exhaustion
Basha



ARE YOU
SURE IT IS THE
SAME MAN?

I... I AM,
OYABUN-SAN!
I AM SURE!



GO GET
NAOTSUKE,
AT ONCE!





ON THE TOP OF THOSE MOUNTAINS, I MET THE LIVING GODDESS! ...SHE ENTRUSTED ME WITH A MESSAGE FOR YOU, PEASANTS OF THE VALLEY!



...FOR YOU, WHOSE CHIEFS MAINTAIN IGNORANT OF THEIR PAST CRIMES! FOR YOU WHO, STUPIDLY, YEAR AFTER YEAR, PAY FOR THEM!



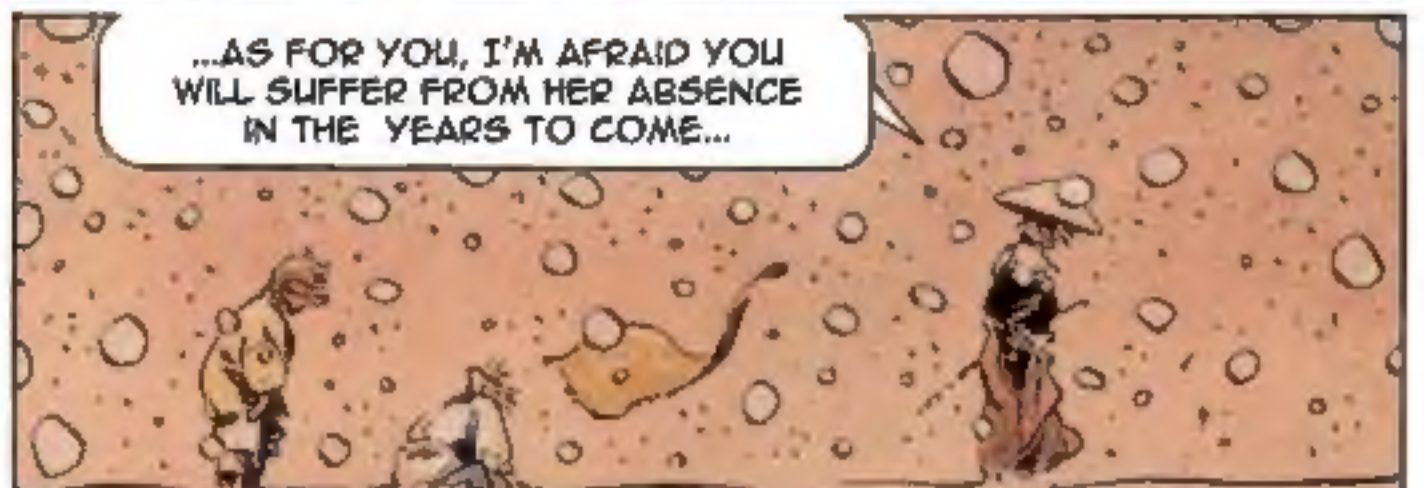
...THE GODDESS TELLS YOU THAT, NOW, THERE WILL BE NO MORE SPRING NOR SUMMER FOR YOU IN THIS VALLEY!



SAMURAI
...TOMOMI?



TOMOMI? ...DON'T WORRY, SHE'S FINE! NOW SHE'S WON'T BE LACKING OF ANYTHING!



...AS FOR YOU, I'M AFRAID YOU WILL SUFFER FROM HER ABSENCE IN THE YEARS TO COME...



THE END

